a structural analysis
of the
sermon on the mount

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andreij kodjak

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A Structural Analysis of the Sermon on the Mount

Andreij Kodjak

To my sons

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Charts:

Author's Point of View and Method

The Sermon on the Mount addresses the closing decades of the twenti-
eth century perhaps more pointedly and pertinently than any other
epoch in history and at the same time responds to the essence of
contemporary intellectual and spiritual quests with a profundity un-
matched by any other text. I regard it as the most timely and relevant
message for our culture and the entire body of contemporary ideas and
concerns.

The relevance of the Sermon on the Mount to modern thinking
may explain and perhaps excuse the following attempt to analyze it,
undertaken, not by a professional theologian and not even by a devoted
Christian, but by a student of Russian literature with some experience
in structural analysis and interest in modern semiotics. The relevance
of the Sermon on the Mount to our epoch seems to me unquestionable,
of concern not only to the professional theologian or pious Christian
but also, like this reader, to the uncommitted, and perhaps skeptical
average person.

Every reader approaches a text within the context of his or her
epoch and from a viewpoint conditioned by cultural and historical
factors as well as personal experience. The reader's viewpoint is one
of the essential components within any written communicative act and
therefore must be defined, especially when the communication comes
from a distant era and, like the Sermon on the Mount, deals with the
most significant aspects of human existence. The reader's viewpoint
might represent an elaborate system, or it can be rather intuitive, not
systematized, and, therefore, difficult to summarize. My viewpoint is
of the latter sort; it is not based on scholarly examination of reliable
data, neither of my own, nor of any authorities in the social or

behavioral sciences, psychology, or philosophy. I have no definite
source, theory or ideology to point to as a base of my world perception
except the general tradition of Christian culture and the historical
events that my generation has witnessed. Therefore, the following
outline of my world view has no other value or purpose than to
facilitate an understanding of my reading of the Sermon on the Mount,
to facilitate comprehension of my examination of this text, and to
clarify some of the possible implications of my conclusions.

1. Life and Death Within Human Existence

In a sense the contemplation of our era, or, more specifically, the
decades of nuclear armament with the prelude of the unparalleld
slaughter of two world wars, Stalinism, and Nazism, is exceptionally
stimulating and rewarding. The fundamental forces inherent in human
existence, that is, the anxiety of death and the resultant struggle for
survival, are foregrounded by the nuclear arms race with such candor
and clarity that no one can remain unaware of them.

    The quotidian existence of the nations engaged in the nuclear arms
race hardly resembles life, permeated as it is by death-imbued and
death-dealing aspirations and efforts. The jargon of the world's leaders,
as well as their decisions and actions, is almost entirely based on the
assumption that the only way to survive is to achieve and maintain
nuclear parity with the adversary – parity in the ability to annihilate
vast portions of humanity, if not the entire human race, in short, to
murder on an unprecedented scale. Thus, national survival is presum-
ably secured by the capacity to inflict death under the assumption that
the more we can kill, the more alive we are. Under this assumption
the very content of a nation's existence amounts to its mastery of the
ability to inflict death, that is, death itself. To this end the economic,
legislative, political, as well as scientific, educational, and intellectual
efforts of the leading nations are shaped by their governments. These
nations focus their intellectual and physical might on the eradication
of human existence. They allow their existence to be controlled, di-
rected, and dominated by the fear of destruction and death, on the one
hand, and, on the other, by their efforts to inflict the fear of annihilation

on their opponents. We may ask how much life is left in such an existence. How much does this existence differ from death?

When we speak about so-called human existence, we obviously do not mean biological existence exclusively but rather the complex conglomerate of psychological, intellectual, spiritual, and physical experiences that human beings are aware of and identify themselves with. Since the content of these experiences is unique for each person, it comprises an individual's existence. Thus, we may equate the content of human existence with existence itself. When the content is geared toward life in general, the existence is permeated with life, but when this content consists of aspirations to death, no matter whose, the very existence is permeated with death.

It would seem that the content of human existence determines its relation to life. Thus the affinity of human existence for life can be discerned by its content, by the degree of its aspiration to life in general, no matter whose, while the infiltration of human existence by death can be observed in the preoccupation with the struggle for survival, with the aspiration to the opponent's contraction or destruction, in other words, by the intensity of the anxiety of death.

It is difficult to assume that a sane person could enjoy the world while being preoccupied with ways and means of destroying any part of it. A person engaged in destruction for his or her advantage and security seems alienated from the joy of life or, actually from life itself. I regard such an existence as a sinister paradox, for while being aimed toward security by means of destruction, this type of existence destroys life within the person and turns into a joyless prelude to death or simply death.

The existence of a human being under the shadow of a nuclear war offers even the average person a magnificent opportunity to discover that the allegedly momentary phenomenon of death is always with us and is able to dominate the existence of an individual or of an entire society. Death can overtake human existence and extend itself in time prior to the termination of biological existence. The extension of death in time is not a sinister figure of speech but the most tangible reality in some contemporary nations whose basic human faculties are suppressed by the anxiety of death and by their all-consuming efforts toward destruction. Their Weltanschauung, their enjoyment of the universe and other human beings, their development of their gifts and

creativity for their own sake, their drive to assist those who have less or nothing simply for the joy of sharing, their talent for understanding and compassion, their ability to communicate with other people and nations — all these treasures of life erode in the national death effort. Ironically, this effort, while meant to protect life, is counterproductive, for it annihilates the object of this protection, the life within human existence, by destroying both the human essence of the society and by depriving its existence of the essential characteristics of life: the enjoyment of the universe. The nations engaged in the production of nuclear death instruments are in danger of turning into collectives of humanoids. In short, the nuclear catastrophe might already have occurred when the nuclear arms race began. Thus, the nuclear age demonstrates that existing does not necessarily mean to live, that the commonly accepted antithesis of life and death is actually insufficient, for into this fundamental opposition a third component — human existence — must be introduced. It can be identified, not figuratively, but concretely and factually with either of the basic extremes — life or death — depending on the content of this very existence. The biological existence of human individuals alone does not signify life. Human beings in a society hypnotized by the anxiety of death may eventually become maniacs, from whose biological existence the essence of life is eliminated. All that may remain in human consciousness and, therefore, in human existence is death in various forms. Thus, annihilation of the nations engaged in a nuclear war would be grotesquely superfluous, since in a certain sense their lives were already effectively terminated decades before. For the most part what has remained since the beginning of the nuclear arms race is their death-permeated biological existence.

The ontological nature of death with its peripheral manifestations of murder and violence, preparation and contemplation of murder as well as the cause of these manifestations — the anxiety of death — begins to affect human existence when this existence begins to depend on the infliction of death in any of its forms. In this context the widely accepted notion of a just war or a just murder is totally meaningless. No matter how tragic and dangerous a situation, violent reaction, even if seemingly justifiable, imposes death on the perpetrator. The more prolonged and all-inclusive this reaction is, the more death-permeated the existence of the self-defending person or nation becomes. Whether

it is just or not is irrelevant. There is no just war, just violence, or just murder because it is ridiculous to justify self-identification with the forces of death or renounce life within the individual's own existence.

All wars, as well as all aggression and acts of violence in human history, were always justified, at least from the point of view of one party. Such self-justification is virtually unavoidable as long as self-preservation by inflicting death is regarded as just. With this attitude any war and any murder will in the final account be justified by the winner, who has the last word. Ironically in the nuclear age there might be no one left to pronounce in retrospect the insane justification of war.

Similarly meaningless are the frequent references to the number and the status of the victims of a war. In regard to the subordination of human existence to death, it is irrelevant whether hundreds or millions were killed during the war or whether these victims were dressed in military or civilian clothes. It is the persons or the nations inflicting death who are the first victims, for they have permeated their own existence with death.

In the context of an existence which can be death- or life-permeated, traditional moral issues are virtually irrelevant. It does not matter any more how much security, stability, justice, or progress a certain kind of behavior secures for society but rather how close the person's existence is to life or to death, in other words, whether the person involved is alive or dead, though still existing. Consequently, it is rather meaningless to proclaim nuclear war or the very possession of nuclear weapons immoral, for regardless of its morality or immorality, it is lethal to the possessor. Such possession transcends the notion of human ethics, for it equates the existence of the possessor with death.

The clash of life and death within human existence, so ominous in our age of nuclear arsenals, underlies the Sermon on the Mount and makes this text unsurpassably pertinent to the dilemma of modern society and its leadership as well as to contemporary individuals. On the other hand, there is no doubt that precisely in our epoch the message of the Sermon on the Mount becomes more accessible to the average reader thanks to the dominion of death, its threat and its terror, transforming the existence of individuals and of whole nations into something remote from life.

Our nuclear, death-permeated age, however, does not present anything new in thè history of the human race but merely epitomizes with exceptional clarity what was always present, perhaps less conspicuously, throughout human history. The anxiety of death with the resulting struggle for survival can be regarded as the invariant in human existence. Human beings have always fought national and civil wars, and have always had personal clashes. Human beings have always resisted death and have strived, not only for its postponement, but for its total eradication and for personal or collective immortality within the passing world, thus for a surrogate immortality. We can regard the entire development of civilization as a continuous struggle for pseudo-immortality on a grandiose scale, for continuity through its monuments, institutions, and ideas. This notion is not new by any means. In our own epoch such authors as Norman O. Brown and Ernest Becker have touched upon it.*

The struggle for surrogate immortality unconsciously carried on by individuals and nations suggests that a person's empirical existence always seemed uncertain. The force of death, even perceived purely mechanically as the momentary termination of existence, was always strongly felt and abhorred. Humanity, as a whole, never knew what life and death really meant. What human beings were aware of and frightened by was the glaring dichotomy between these two incomprehensible antipodes in human experience. In order to escape this horrifying dichotomy, human beings have always preoccupied themselves with lasting and, if possible, everlasting things, and have tried to identify themselves with these allegedly deathless objects, institutions, and concepts. In virtually all human achievements from personal glory, superiority, and wealth to national might, security, and growth, the drive for self-immortalization can be easily traced. This drive might explain the multitude of evidently insane efforts and sacrifices. The marvelous monumental edifices erected as tokens of the immortality of a nation's ruler quite soon are regarded as his actual immortality. It also metonymically includes his subjects who share this surrogate immortality according to their proximity to the ruler and his court.

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* Norman O. Brown, *Life Against Death, The Psychological Meaning of History*, Wesleyan University Press, 1959; Ernest Becker, *The Denial of Death*, The Free Press, 1973.

Likewise, the seeming unperishability of gold is shared by its owners, according to the scale of ownership, and thus people irrationally aspire to or accumulate great wealth.

The anxiety of death and aspiration for surrogate immortality go hand in hand. When the latter is felt acutely the former becomes more apparent. Anything that may remind people of death is abhorred, for they do not want to be reminded of their finitude and desire absolute security. The consciousness and intensity of this desire, of course, varies but it is probably shared by everyone to one degree or another. Our most basic, and therefore customary, reactions testify to this effect.

The anxiety of death underlies the sensations of pain and pleasure. The distinction made between this pair of opposites can probably be explained in terms of security and threat. Anything that might assure the safety of human existence appears to be attractive while anything endangering our existence appears repulsive. Physical, as well as psychological, security and self-assertion appear to generate the sensation of pleasure while insecurity, danger, and contraction are unconsciously perceived as death-related threats and therefore seem painful.

The very everpresence of the two extremes, of pleasure and pain, in human responses to most experiences seems enigmatic unless we postulate that the sensation of pleasure is generated by or associated with the assertion of our existence while the sensation of pain is generated by a threat to that existence. Thus, the smell of flowers is regarded as pleasant, while the smell of a decaying body is perceived as unpleasant. We also respond differently to, let us say, two obviously false allegations about ourselves – one laudable and, therefore, pleasant; the other degrading and, therefore, painful.

It does not take much perspicuity to detect an inherent human obsession with bigness, which is preferred to smallness in size or number. In this universal code of evaluation, unless proven otherwise, a larger territory, a taller building or human body is regarded as desirable. A shape, appearance, or action admired by the majority, as well as anything appreciated by the minority, possessing a large quantity of some generally accepted token of immortality, such as money or power, is considered beautiful, fashionable, and is generally followed and imitated.

The human obsession with size and growth may be traced to the anxiety of death and the aspiration for immortality. The arch-model

for this axiological system is, I believe, the growing infant, on the one hand, and the disintegrating corpse, on the other. Anything that resembles old age or a dead body appears threatening and repulsive, just as anything that expands like a growing infant appears reassuring and attractive. Contraction is avoided while expansion is preferred; passivity is not favored, but activity, dynamism, and speed are hailed; silence and quiet are unsought, while the noise and power of sound are preferred. To reverse this fundamental human axiology, we would have to prove that the larger size or quantity reduces health, safety, or efficiency.

The same model can be seen in individual actions and lifestyles. Human self-assertive drives, mostly irrational, can be comprehended in view of the permanent anxiety of the peril of death. In particular, self-assertion and self-expansion, which are exagerated, overdone, and, therefore, senseless can be viewed as symptoms of human aspiration for something greater than the act itself. It is impossible to rationalize overabundance, overprotection, overkilling, overeating, or overdoing anything; the real reason for all these excesses is different from that alleged. It is senseless to consume an amount of food that cannot be digested, to accumulate an amount of gold that is unspendable, to achieve such a degree of popularity and glory that it is spread among unknown and anonymous masses, and, therefore, cannot be enjoyed, or to pile up a nuclear arsenal that endangers all biological existence on the planet, including one's own. The origin of all these excesses is the compulsion to protect ourselves from the power of death, and to achieve deathlessness, or surrogate immortality.

Generally, anything large attracts people as if it were security, a source of life, and, therefore, a source of pleasure. This may explain the human compulsion toward self-identification with anyone of exceptional strength, success, power, or wealth. This compulsion, as persistent as the force of gravity, pulls people away from losers toward winners, away from those who are weak to those who are strong and powerful or to those who possess some token of surrogate immortality in the form of economic, political, or professional power and authority.

The same postulate may shed some light on such an irrational phenomenon as human cruelty. Why is it that inflicting pain or simply observing it in another may generate pleasure, while the same sensation experienced by the observer would be painful? The reason for cruelty

is so deeply rooted that we hardly notice it and accept it as something natural. In every game one player must win, and one must lose; one is pleased and the other disappointed. The winner cannot enjoy victory without witnessing the defeat and, therefore, the pain of the opponent. The security of the winner is emphasized by the insecurity of the loser, and this contrast is respectively enjoyable or painful. Only early childhood, which is not yet affected by the awareness of human mortality and the struggle for survival, knows games without winners and losers, games enjoyable for themselves, for the very experience of the game. Adult games usually contain both the humiliation of the loser and the self-assertion of the winner. The model of the adult game can easily be found in adult existence, in some instances entirely geared toward competing, winning, defeating, enjoying another's defeat and, therefore, cultivating some degree of cruelty in ourselves.

The self-assertiveness of cruelty explains the equally strange reluctance of human beings to exhibit compassion. While cruelty emphasizes our emotional distance from defeat and, therefore, from destruction and death, compassion identifies with the pain experienced by another human being and, therefore, places the compassionate person under the peril of death. This might be the reason why compassion is actually an undervalued phenomenon in a predominantly competitive society. Compassion appears to prevent self-extension, self-assertion, and self-inflation, for it identifies us with the pain of the insecurity of another human being. While in reality compassion broadens our perception of the world through our identification with the experience of another human being, it appears undesirable in a competitive situation, for it threatens to bring the compassionate person closer to the pain of insecurity and, therefore, contraction and death.

To the above list of perhaps simplistic observations and naive explanations, I would like to add an equally naive observation concerning lies. Clearly lies and distortions are meant to serve the interests of the liar. More pertinent for this discussion is the human inclination to accept and to participate in some outright lies and distortions as long as they provide some feeling of security or superiority and usually both. It is astounding to observe how some persons with otherwise superior minds, leading professional authorities superbly trained to gather and examine scientific data, are in some cases highly susceptible to pleasing lies or flattery and in accepting them exhibit a stunning

degree of stupidity. Shockingly they renounce their intellects and their analytical skills for comforting illusions. Similarly astounding is the willingness to accept any slander or false allegation, provided the target of these lies is the competitor or the opponent. While facing a pair of lies, one advantageous to ourselves and the other harmful to the opponent, many of us unconsciously suppress our critical minds, while when facing analogous lies of reverse functions, that is, harmful to ourselves and advantageous to the adversary, the entire force of our intellect is swiftly mobilized for eradication of the lie and defense of the assumed truth.

Bigotry, flattery, slander, and demagoguery are based on this irrational trend. In all these cases the deceiver must not be overconcerned with the persuasiveness of the distortions or false allegations, for, no matter how ridiculous, they will be welcome, provided they offer the illusion of security. All kinds of propaganda are based on this principle and are surprisingly successful. Human beings are willing to renounce their common sense and in some cases even their brilliant minds in order to escape their anxiety of death and to boost their sense of superiority and security. Thus, the anxiety of death and the urge for security can turn individuals as well as entire nations into brainless bigots, proud and self-righteous fools. Human history and individual lives are full of such examples. Obviously, human beings pursue not so much truth, as security.

Assuming that the essence of all lies and distortions is directly related to the human anxiety of death and the unconscious seeking of a surrogate immortality, we can appreciate the gigantically destructive effect on human existence of deception, one of the broadest avenues for the infiltration of our existence by death. I personally cannot think of any more deadly feature of human existence than deception, except death itself, which, when regarded as the ultimate reality and the outcome of human existence, is the source of all lies and itself the greatest lie. When human existence is presumably secured by lies and deceptions, it becomes permeated with death. Thus, lying equals self-destruction on a personal, as well as a national, level.

The inherent human aspiration for immortality in the empirical world is likewise expressed in control over the death of other human beings. While death appears to be arbitrary and beyond the ability of human beings to schedule, those who direct, plan, and initiate death

may experience the illusion of conquering it. The illusion of such control might be achieved in murdering a human being. Behind all human death-inflicting acts may be the aspiration for personal domination over death, that is, personal deathlessness, or surrogate immortality. The explanation for the irrationality of evil may be found exactly here.

The first biblical record of murder (Gen. 4: 3 – 16) represents not so much Cain's jealousy of Abel, but rather Cain's despair over being rejected by God, the source of life and immortality. This despair might have motivated Cain to undertake independently his struggle for immortality and to establish his control over death by inflicting it on his brother. Thus, we may assume that the first murder in the Bible originated from the anxiety of human finitude. In our age of nuclear weapons, the very possibility of effecting millions of death with one single command might be unconsciously reassuring to a leader whose own death is horrifyingly close, while the very possession of enormous stockpiles of nuclear weapons might provide an entire nation with an unconscious but real illusion of immortality. Thus, Cain's fratricide, ancient pyramids and modern nuclear arsenals may serve the same irrational aspiration for surrogate immortality.

Anyone can assemble an endless list of examples illustrating the preference for self-assuring deceptions, as well as for growth in all domains of human existence, including, ironically, religious organizations.* All that it takes is to view human nature in estrangement, to adopt the vision of a child, free of all customary compromises and adjustments to the status quo and ready to ask embarrassing and painful questions. To my mind our axiology deriving from our inherent resistance to death, on the one hand, and, on the other, the false but persistent aspiration to pseudo-immortality is most clearly demonstrated by competitive societies or situations. The nuclear arms race is perhaps the zenith of this axiology, for the insanity of the human obsession with size, deception, and control over death, has led in this case to obvious absurdity. The sacrifices to achieve superiority in nuclear capability are unprecedented, and, as a result, death dominates the existence of societies engaged in this competition. The nuclear arms

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* Similar illustrations can be found in Alan Harrington's *The Immortalists*, Celestial Arts, 1977.

race is actually the clearest model of universal resistance to death and the human urge for an alternative to mortality, an alternative attainable within the perishable world, that is, surrogate immortality. The nuclear arms race is also a clear example of the obsession with size in that the nuclear powers firmly believe that their opponent is seeking self-expansion. Therefore, each of the superpowers assumes with certainty that its own annihilation constitutes the opponent's highest aspiration. Thus, fear of the opponent's growth, presumably generating the other's contraction or annihilation, entails competition which demands total national devotion to the nuclear death project. The result is the permeation of human existence by death, which paradoxically turns the very resistance to death into an absurdity: the obsession with security and surrogate immortality generates enormous nuclear arsenals, gigantic stockpiles of death, the primary source of disintegration and decay.

Such a situation would be unthinkable if so-called human nature had not manifested for ages all the forces that are at work in our time. On a smaller scale the struggle for survival was always present and in this respect the contemporary world does not offer anything significantly new. There is nothing novel in killing, no matter on what scale. The antinomy of death and life, or mortality and immortality, was always with the human race, and while generating endless confrontations, this antinomy did not result in anything except the sinister equation of human existence with death. The question that the historical experience of humanity raises is not so much how to resist death but rather how to equate and identify human existence with life and in this way to triumph over the anxiety and the might of death, that is, over the all-permeating notion of human mortality.

In our nuclear age the question is not so much one of national disarmament or the elimination of nuclear weaponry, but rather the elimination of the anxiety of death and with it the struggle for survival and security. As long as human beings unconsciously strive for surrogate immortality in pleasure, power, and popularity, we cannot expect peace among individuals or nations. As long as size remains the aspiration of the average person, national borders will be stained by blood. As long as human beings respect personal pride, love of success, and victory, their leaders will pursue the same ideals, and the arsenals of the leading nations will grow. But most importantly, as long as humanity harbors anxiety of biological death and resists it through

self-protection, self-assertion, self-expansion, smugness, pride, decep-
tion, and murder, the existence of human beings will remain permeated
by death and bear little resemblance to life.

Unfortunately human society in modern times ignores and perhaps
suppresses certain trends in human existence which counter the patterns
of self-extension. These trends can be summarized by sharing, which
can be regarded as the testimony to human inherent immunity or
emancipation from the anxiety of death. Sharing is giving something
valuable, and giving is, at least on the surface of things, losing, or
diminishing our share of the commodity. Thus, sharing does not
participate in the cult of size and in the striving for self-assertion and
self-inflation, for sharing in its full meaning stands for selfless giving
without any material, social, or psychological compensation which
would turn sharing into trading. In our practical world sharing equals
self-contraction.

In terms of the anxiety of death and the urge for security, sharing
is totally incomprehensible. It contradicts the basic human aim of
asserting our own pseudo-immortality, individual or collective, and,
therefore, cannot be understood within the context of practical human
resistance to ultimate destruction and death, that is, human mortality.
On the contrary, the human capacity to share, in other words, to
contract the individual's own assertion of existence, can be compre-
hended only with the perhaps unconscious certainty of immortality
and the resulting fearlessness of biological death. A selfless person
who shares without any reward transgresses the boundaries of death-
permeated existence and at least for the moment experiences joy.

The joy of sharing presents an additional contradiction. On the
one hand, it is supposed that acquisition, the accumulation of various
commodities like wealth, fame, and power, generates a sensation of
pleasure and happiness, while on the other, ironically, sharing the same
commodities, that is, the unrewarded contracting of the amount of our
possessions, generates joy. Moreover, unshared happiness is virtually
joyless and rather sinister in its essence. The pursuit of personal
happiness appears to be a death-permeated, individual project, while
sharing generates joy, for in this instance the sharing person experiences
life.

The facts of self-contraction in sharing are little recognized in
contemporary society, not because they do not exist, but because

general attention is not focused on them. The human capacity for
sharing and other acts of this nature are, by and large, ignored simply
because sharing is the antipode of the commonly advocated self-
inflation, is not oriented toward bigness and therefore does not fall
into the generally accepted system of values. However, the human
capacity to share is one of the most revealing phenomena in human
nature, for it testifies to humanity's deep awareness of its inherent
immortality, which, being simply the reality of life, does not need to
be ascertained in everlasting objects and personal expansion.

The very fact that genuine sharing, without any practical benefit,
is usually ignored in contemporary society and that a truly sharing
person is not rewarded by the approval of society indicates that sharing
cannot be regarded as a cultural phenomenon. On the contrary, sharing
and selfless giving might become dangerous, for such behavior might
be viewed as irresponsible, and should a large amount of wealth be
involved, the person might be legally pronounced incompetent. Thus,
sharing, in general, is acultural or perhaps anticultural in its essence.

Sharing and its joy, as well as compassion, demonstrate the potential
to permeate human existence with life instead of subordinating our
existence to death by various self-inflating projects. Thus, while human
existence can be equated with death, as shown above, it can also
be equated with life and so can testify in the real sense to human
immortality.

The answer to the question raised by historical experience, that is,
how can we liberate ourselves from the anxiety of death, must be
sought in the religious and spiritual domains. An early Christian
document, *The Teaching of the Lord to the Gentiles, through the
Twelve Apostles*, commonly called *The Didache*, formulates in the
very first sentence the possibility for empirical human existence to be
dominated either by life or by death, to be identified either with
immortality or mortality: "There are two Ways: a Way of Life and a
Way of Death, and the difference between these two Ways is great."*
The two attributive phrases, "of Life" and "of Death", identify the
notion "the Way," or human existence, with either Life or Death.
The following description of the "Way of Life" contains some direct
quotations from the Sermon on the Mount, while the description of

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* See *Early Christian Writings*, Penguin Books, 1976, p. 227.

the "Way of Death" enumerates actions conditioned by the obsession with bigness, with self-assertion in pleasure and aggression, as well as with competition and the struggle for survival in the broad sense of this term.

While in *The Didache* the two antipodes acting within human existence are clarified from the very outset, in the Sermon on the Mount the threefold system of Life, Way, and Death, or life, empirical existence, and death, is rather connoted and demands a careful analytical reading of the entire text in order to arrive at the understanding that the authors of *The Didache* obviously possessed. Such a reading of the Sermon on the Mount and its examination with the analytical tools of structuralism are the aim of this study.

2. Human Existence and the Major Interpretations of the Sermon

At the present time structuralism is not yet well known to the general public. Therefore, while the structural method was extensively applied in analyzing the Sermon on the Mount, in the exposition of this analysis structural terminology is reduced to the minimum, and the few technical terms will be briefly explained at the end of this chapter. At this point, however, we should examine the prevailing interpretations of the Sermon on the Mount in light of the theory of communication in its most basic terms.

The multitude of interpretations of the Sermon on the Mount might appear to an outsider surprising indeed. The text has been accessible long enough for scholarly scrutiny to provide more clarity and uniformity of understanding. The present situation, however, as described by leading scholars,* is quite the contrary. Modern theology regards the Sermon on the Mount in many ways which can be summarized briefly and schematically, as follows:

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* See Harvey K. McArthur, *Understanding the Sermon on the Mount*, Harper & Row, 1960, pp. 106 – 127; his survey includes twelve interpretations. Also helpful is the annotated bibliography and survey of interpretations compiled by Warren S. Kissinger, *The Sermon on the Mount, a History of Interpretation and Bibliography*, The Scarecrow Press, N. J., 1975, pp. 1 – 5.

1. The Sermon on the Mount is a code of ethics, representing the Will of God. However, because of the extreme radicalism of this code, the average person could not possibly be expected to implement it. Consequently, this code is meant only for those who have already attained the kingdom of heaven, while for the rest it remains a remote and virtually *impracticable law of ethics*.

2. The Sermon on the Mount is not a law of ethics, but rather an outline of an ideal, which is meant to serve only as a contrast to the actual imperfection of human beings and force them to acknowledge their unworthiness. Thus, the final aim of the sermon is the repentance of people. This interpretation can be viewed as the theory of the *unattainable ideal*.

3. The Sermon on the Mount consists of vague ethical guidelines, which must be implemented only accompanied by cammon sense with regard to the needs of the society. In other words, the sermon is an *ethical guideline*.

4. The Sermon on the Mount was addressed, not to the assembled mass of people who came to listen to Christ, but only to His disciples who stood close to Him during His speech (Matt. 5: 1, 2). In other words, the sermon addresses only a few select ones − the apostles or later members of monastic orders. In this sense the sermon is read as a *code of discipleship*.

5. The Sermon on the Mount, as recorded in Matthew, was never actually uttered in whole by Christ. The Evangelist presents his own selection of Christ's sayings, pronounced at various places and occasions, presumably compiled by early Christians in a written document, which presumably perished, but was available to Matthew and Luke. The alleged compilation of Christ's sayings is commonly referred to as the *Q Source*.

6. The Sermon on the Mount as a whole does not represent Christ's discourse or a compilation of His sayings, but rather early Christian catechetical instruction to new converts. Thus, the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's narrative must be regarded as an early Christian *didactic document* or as part of it, rather than Christ's discourse.*

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* This is not mentioned by H. K. McArthur and is advanced by Joachim Jeremias in *The Sermon on the Mount,* Fortress, Philadelphia, 1981, pp. 19 − 23.

7. The Sermon on the Mount contains an ethical code limited in application to the very short period of time between Christ's mission and His imminent Second Coming, allegedly expected by the early Christians. The claim of this theory is that the extreme radicalism of the Sermon on the Mount can be regarded as reasonable only when applied to the presumably short period of time left to human society and its institutions before the awaited eschatological termination of human history. The extreme ethical code for this short period is referred to as *interim ethics*.

Even such a rough outline of prevailing modern interpretations of the Sermon on the Mount* clarifies one significant phenomenon. Each of the above interpretations is aimed at the communicative function of the Sermon on the Mount, and while each of these negates one or some of the indispensible factors of communication, they all, as a whole, eradicate even the notion of communication presented by Matthew in his description of the pronouncement of the Sermon on the Mount. Before going into details, however, let us first establish the basic components of any act of communication.

Any human communication involves two participants, the addresser and the addressee, between whom it takes place. The addresser, in order to transmit a message, must establish physical contact with the addressee, must make this contact in a code comprehensible to the addressee within a context, which is clear to both of them. Roman Jakobson** has presented his system as follows:

<div align="center">

Context
Message
Addresser ——————————— Addressee
Contact
Code

</div>

A simple example might clarify this scheme. Let us take a short statement, "I am hungry today," pronounced by one of two patrons while examining the menu in a fancy restaurant. The utterance, "I am

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* Anabaptists and L. Tolstoy, who preached radical adherence to the sermon, are not mentioned here, for their impact on contemporary Christendom seems to be very slight.
** Roman Jakobson, "Concluding Statement: Linguistics and Poetics," in *Style and Language*, ed. by Thomas A. Sebeok, The M.I.T. Press, 1960, p. 353.

hungry today," represents an act of verbal communication going from the speaker, the addresser, to the companion at the table, the addressee, within well-established contact, for both of them sit at the same table, within the context of a fancy restaurant, a place of good food. On a purely linguistic level the code is the language in which the addresser speaks and which the addressee comprehends, but on the semiotic level the code represents the rules of interpretation of the communication. These rules must be shared by the addresser and the addressee. In this case the sentence, "I am hungry today," does not mean only that the addresser is really hungry, but rather that he or she intends to order an extravagantly refined meal. Thus, the sentence, "I am hungry today," under these circumstances, means, among other things, "I intend to have a gourmet meal."

If we change the context of this communication, however, and place the same two people in a concentration camp, then, provided that the contact between them is established and that they speak the same primary language, the utterance of the addresser, "I am hungry today," may be perceived by the addressee in different codes because of the different context. Thus, different message or messages will be derived from this communication, for the word "hungry" would signify real need for sustenance. It might be understood in the code of black humor with the emphasis on "today," for in a concentration camp people are hungry every day, or it can be interpreted in the code of request, as begging for some food if the addresser knows that the addressee has something extra that could be shared. Thus, the same utterance within a different context acquires different codes and communicates different messages.

In Matthew's 5−7, the addresser is Christ; the addressees are the disciples and the crowd of people at the foot of the mountain, and the communication consists of Christ's sermon. The readers of Matthew's Gospel can identify themselves with the audience, thus becoming the addressees within Christ's act of verbal communication via the Evangelist's intermediacy. The readers can become the addressees in Matthew's account, however, only if all the remaining factors of verbal communication outlined in Jakobson's schema remain the same; that is, the readers must receive Christ's message within approximately the same context and the same code as Christ's disciples and the crowd at the foot of the mountain. If Christ's communication reaches the readers

in another context or code, the message of the sermon becomes muti-
lated or inaccessible, and the communication intended by the addresser,
Christ, is not received by the readers.

At this point we can examine the effect of the major interpretations
of the sermon on Christ's communication with Matthew's readers.
Interpretations 1, 2, and 3 question the code of communication accord-
ing to which Christ's message should be perceived. Should it be re-
garded as (1) an *impracticable law of ethics*, (2) an *unattainable ideal*,
or (3) only a general *ethical guideline*? In these three interpretations
the code of the addresser would be different from the code of perception
of the addressees in Matthew's version. The apostles and the crowd
apparently did not share any of the above codes, as indicated at the
end of the narrative: "And when Jesus finished these sayings, the
crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who
had authority, and not as their scribes" (7: 28, 29). The three above
interpretations cannot be ascribed to the addressees within the Gospel,
for the addresser's authority, or His extraordinary vantage point, from
which the teaching is offered, is emphasized in their reaction. Therefore,
we must conclude that either the communication recorded in Matthew's
account did not take place, that is, the addresser made the pronounce-
ment in one of the three proposed codes, but the audience inferred a
different code, or if Christ and His audience did not adopt one of these
codes, the intended communication with the reader via the Evangelist
does not take place, for the reader, by accepting one of these three
proposed codes, does not share the code of the addresser and the
addressees present at that time.

The fourth interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount as a *code
of discipleship* is concerned with the contact in the act of verbal
communication. According to this interpretation, Christ in His commu-
nication contacted only His disciples; therefore, the average reader
cannot think, without being presumptuous, that the Sermon on the
Mount is meant for him or her.

Equally questionable is the fifth interpretation, the compilation
theory, suggesting the *Q Source* as the basis of Matthew's Sermon on
the Mount. This interpretation questions the addresser, since it suggests
that Christ never actually delivered the Sermon on the Mount as a
whole. Moreover, this hypothetical construct removes the sermon and
its message from the realm of reality by erasing the specific addressees,

context, and code, and shifts the sermon as a whole into the realm of fiction or the Evangelist's fabrication.

The same effect is achieved by the sixth interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount as an early Christian catechetical or *didactic document*, which the Evangelist allegedly inserted into his narrative and acclaimed as Christ's discourse. This interpretation, like the previous one, removes from the act of communication the addresser himself and, consequently, the message, the addressees, the context, the code, and the contact. It results in a total denial of the entire act of communication, that is, the Sermon on the Mount as a whole.

Finally, the seventh interpretation of the sermon as a document of *interim ethics* deals exclusively with the last remaining component of the communicative act, the context, which, if the communication is to be effective, must be the same for the addresser and the addressee. The proponents of *interim ethics* consider two contexts: that of the alleged eschatological expectations of the early Christian Church, and that of twentieth-century readers. Presumably, these two contexts must differ from each other and from the context of the addresses in Matthew's narrative.

The question, of course, arises whether the adressees during Christ's delivery of His sermon subscribed to any of the modern interpretations. The answer is clearly negative. The disciples with the crowd at the foot of the mountain could not have rejected any part of the communication, for the disciples continued to follow Christ, and the crowds, according to the Evangelist, were deeply impressed by Christ's message. Thus, unless we assume that the entire scene of Christ's sermon is the Evangelist's fabrication, we can ascertain that the modern interpretations of the Sermon on the Mount deny or change the factors of communication underlying the real sermon, disrupting the very communicative act of the Sermon on the Mount.

In all fairness, it must be stated that all the modern interpretations result from individual scholarly efforts and do not constitute a coordinated attempt to discredit the very fact of Christ's communication as recorded by Matthew. However, the common aim of these modern interpretations becomes obvious as soon as they are examined according to the six fundamental factors within an act of communication. These interpretations do not merely tame or emasculate the Sermon on the Mount but rather totally eradicate it. They negate one or more

indispensible factors within the communicative act of the sermon and therefore deprive Matthew's readers of access to it. The modern interpretations render the Sermon on the Mount a peculiar communicative act without addresser, addressess, context, contact, or code resulting in a communication that does not communicate. Thus, various theological efforts have jointly silenced the Speaker of Matthew's Sermon on the Mount.

How can seemingly disconnected, individual efforts act in such unison without underlying agreement or coordination? Is it at all possible? Certainly it is. The only force necessary for such surprising homogeneity is a common motivation or fundamental impulse. In the case of the various modern interpretations of the Sermon on the Mount the common impulse is the prevailing concern with the preservation of the safety, security, and expansion of a given individual, church, or Christian society and culture. The anxiety of contraction and death underlying most human actions also resulted in muting the message of the Sermon on the Mount.

Resistance to the message of the Sermon on the Mount is quite understandable if we realize that it was injected into the world of human struggle for survival generated by the inherent aversion to biological death and the urge for surrogate immortality. What is threatened by the Sermon on the Mount is the safety of the person who is expected to turn the other cheek to an offender (5: 39); the security and growth of the Christian church, which might shrink if the ideology of the Sermon on the Mount were rigorously advocated; and the security of the entire Judeo-Christian civilization, its legislatures, its prosperity, and culture which would be greatly endangered if Christians stopped serving mammon (6: 24), loved their enemies (5: 44), and chose the narrow way and the narrow gate that leads to life (7: 13, 14). The discrepancy between the practical needs of a person, a church, and a society, on the one hand, and the ideology of the sermon, on the other, is too gaping to be overlooked or whitewashed. It demands either the revolutionary transformation of human existence or an adjustment of the ideology of the sermon to the status quo in the empirical world. Obviously the latter obtains in many instances. Within Christendom there is sufficient attraction to size, power, security, and self-expansion on the individual, as well as the ecclesiastic and social levels to secure the continuation of human existence according to the traditional rules

of the struggle for survival and the search for surrogate immortality in the transient world. This attraction has successfully countered the revolutionary assault of Christ's ideology or religion most explicitly stated in the Sermon on the Mount.

The professional theologian who undertook the task of interpreting the Sermon on the Mount was not always an objective listener or addressee but rather a reader already committed to the authority of the communication subject to the analysis. For such a scholar the results and conclusions of the analysis had a binding force, and, therefore, had to be adjusted accordingly. Such a scholar differs significantly from anyone among Christ's disciples or the crowd hearing Christ's teaching. They were free to leave at any time without any harm or discomfort if Christ's teaching offended them. They did not call themselves Christians yet, were not committed to a church, did not feel dedicated to so-called Christian culture and civilization. Quite different is the position of theologians and clergymen. For such it is difficult to separate from all the aspects of Christendom, its practical interests, and, therefore, the content of their teaching must be adjusted to human security and convenience. In short, the interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount, because of the prior commitment, is predetermined.

An ideological commitment made prior to the examination of a communication may, in fact, disrupt the communication. Such a commitment represents a code of perception which does not necessarily coincide with the code of the addresser. Thus, those who advance modern interpretations of the Sermon on the Mount and approach it with the desire for security do not share with the addresser the same code, and, therefore, cannot perceive this communication. Their demand for security imposes on them another, erroneous code of perception and subverts their scholarly effort.

In the attempt to protect the practical safety of Christian individuals and institutions against the enormous threat of the Sermon on the Mount, simple adjustments of individual maxims did not suffice. They were developed but were abandoned.* The entire communication of

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* These attempts occur already in Matthew's 5: 22, which deals with anger against one's brother, here a softening phrase "without a cause" was added; and in 5: 32, which forbids divorce, a compromising phrase "except on the ground of unchastity" was probably added.

the Sermon on the Mount had to be excised from Christian awareness, and this operation succeeded partially, or perhaps not so partially,* by the discrediting in one way or another of the six individual factors of communication. This process would easily have been predicted if the inherent human dread of insecurity and death had been fully appreciated.

What is interesting, however, in this slow but persistent eradication of Christ's chief communication is the fact that this effort cannot be comprehended without the realization that the participating theologians share the same Weltanschauung with all self-assertive und security-seeking human beings who build monstrous empires, irrationally accumulate riches, accept outright distortions, and insanely struggle for survival. This world perception is dominated by the anxiety of death and total disbelief in inherent human immortality. Paradoxically the motivation for the basic interpretions of the Sermon on the Mount is the same human urge for practical security, self-assertion, and surrogate immortality that has brought the contemporary world to the brink of nuclear destruction and has permeated with death the present existence of nations so armed. On the other hand, one can make the equally paradoxical assumption that had Christendom accepted and devoted itself to the seemingly dangerous ideology of the Sermon on the Mount in its entirety, the lethal forces presently at work in the nuclear arms race would have been considerably reduced, and human existence would be identified with life rather than with death. One can easily argue that the silencing of the addresser in Matthew's version of the Sermon on the Mount had an overpowering, tragic effect on all Christendom, part of which now finds itself engaged in the nuclear death project. Thus, we can suggest that the urge for security underlying the basic interpretations of the Sermon on the Mount has ironically increased the insecurity in the world to an unprecedented degree and is threatening the human race with total annihilation. Silencing the advocate for life and piling up nuclear arsenals have a common genesis. The parties responsible for both these efforts share the disbelief in inherent human immortality and the urge for security in the empirical world and thus support death in human existence. The responsibility

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* See: *Jesus Christ in the Lives of Americans Today*, The Gallup Organization, Inc., 1982, p. 67.

for the prevalence of death within contemporary human existence rests
at least partially with Christendom. It is the same fear of suffering, the
alleged prelude to death, and the attraction to pleasure, the alleged
symptom of life; resentment of contraction and smallness, the alleged
signs of disintegration, and affection for size and power, the assumed
signs of growth and life; the willingness to accept pleasing distortions
and lies; the anxiety of death and the urge for surrogate immortality
in the transient world that have led to the erection of ancient pyramids
and palaces, the piling up of mountains of gold and weapons, the
building of empires, the glorification of leaders and idols, and the
silencing for many people of the Teacher who preached the Way of
Life, as opposed to the Way of Death, in what is commonly called the
Sermon on the Mount.

3. Human Existence and this Reading of the Sermon

It is not the aim of this study, however, to cast the blame for the
present tragic state of humanity on one or another school of thought
or belief. The major issue at this point is that any analysis of a
communicative act must be conducted with greater caution than is
detectable in major interpretations of the Sermon on the Mount. The
analysis cannot be dominated by a preconceived ideology, no matter
how attractive it may appear. A student of a text, and, above all, of
a religious text, must make a special effort to approach the material
under investigation without cultural or personal prejudice, with a mind
as open as possible to any message, for, as was shown, a preconceived
code of perception may distort the communication under examination.
After all, religious texts are primarily preoccupied with revealing a
new and startling world view and, therefore, must contradict to a
greater or lesser degree the established and commonly accepted ideol-
ogy. Commitment to an established ideology must inevitably preclude
the comprehension of a new and astonishing reality usually revealed
in religious texts.

    In the present study a conscious effort was made to avoid any
assumption of a cultural or personal nature. After the first rather
intuitive hypothesis was made, namely, that inherent immortality,
which enables humanity to free itself from the anxiety of death,

underlines the message of the Sermon on the Mount, I examined the text with a persistent effort to eliminate from the analysis any allegiance to established cultural or personal values. During the analysis of the Sermon on the Mount, I endeavored to read this text, not as a Christian concerned with the position and security of the church in this world or one who loves and cherishes Christian culture and wishes it a secure and fruitful future. I took the position that should the emerging message of the Sermon on the Mount render security and expansion of the Christian church, as well as of Christendom, with its cultural heritage unattainable, this notion would have no effect on the conclusions concerning the message of the text.

In our age of shattered faith in endless human progress, to accept such a detached stance, is not difficult. However, for the purpose of the analysis of the Sermon on the Mount detachment must be to some degree curtailed, for the reader's code and context of perception must be as close as possible to that of the original audience and the Speaker as recorded by Matthew. Only within the original code and context, as was shown above, can we at least partially comprehend Christ's discourse. Thus, we must ask: What kind of code and context of perception did the Speaker, or the addresser, of the Sermon on the Mount expect of His audience, or addressees? Any examination of the Sermon on the Mount, as of any other communication, must begin with this question and can proceed only if it is answered with at least some degree of accuracy.

It might appear at first glance that the question posed above is immensely complex. Perhaps it is, but we can facilitate this task by refusing to be overly ambitious and approach it, not so much as a quest for total historical accuracy but rather as a search for the ideological base that Christ would have expected his audience to share.

We can assert from the Evangelist's narrative and from general knowledge of life in Palestine at that time that the crowd, as well as the disciples around Christ, were part of the lower social strata of the Jewish nation. The disciples that Matthew mentions were fishermen, and the crowd that followed Christ from all parts of Palestine was hardly predominantly composed of reputable, affluent, and prominent members of society. On the other hand, one must also remember that the Jewish nation at that time was a province of the Roman empire, was occupied by foreign forces, paid taxes to a foreign government,

and, above all, was humiliated by the political authority of a pagan, that is, in religious terms inferior, power. Thus, Christ was doubtlessly aware that His audience had very little to lose in the contemporary world, for His listeners represented the lower social strata of society and the nation at its political and historical ebb.

On the other hand, being politically humiliated and in part economically, as well as socially, underprivileged, Christ's audience, like the entire Jewish nation, was well aware of its unique religious background, superior to any other nation in the world, including its oppressors. This antinomy between the political power and spiritual values could have attuned the audience favorably to the paradoxical constructs of thought implied in the practical situation, in which the superior society had to succumb to the brutal force of an inferior culture. This paradox could have been understood by Christ's audience on two levels: on the political level in regard to the Jewish nation vis-à-vis the power of Rome and on the socio-religious level in regard to the poor, who in the Old Testament tradition were considered worthier than the rich and yet at the time of Christ were ignored, if not mistreated, by the affluent classes of the Jewish nation. Thus, we may assume that the audience listening to the Sermon on the Mount was exceptionally prone to paradoxical thinking, for these people had been exposed to a flagrant violation of generally expected norms in the political, social, and economic structure of the world. Moreover, because of the audience's awareness of the paradoxical violation of expected norms and values, they could not have been regarded as happy, hopeful, and optimistic in the usual sense of the word. On the contrary, we may assume that Christ was aware that His audience was sorrowful.

There is, however, an additional detail preserved by the Evangelist that sheds some light on the emotions and general frame of mind of those who listened to the Sermon on the Mount and of which the addresser must have been acutely aware. We find this detail in the narrative introducing the sermon and, therefore, pertinent to its setting: "So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them" (Matt. 4:24). Among the great crowds that followed Christ were many who were disabled and who suffered physical and mental illnesses, as well as their relatives, who had to endure grief over their suffering and the burden of taking

care of them. The political and socio-economic paradoxes that this audience had witnessed, it also experienced in a reverse way personally. That incurable diseases were cured by the Speaker, whose teaching they listened to on the slopes of the mountain, that common-sense expectations were miraculously violated for the good, constituted a new paradox in the people's experience, a new testimony that empirical reality is not as reliable as it may appear and that its laws are subject to violation. In our culture such an attitude might be designated as the openmindedness of a child or the sort of naiveté of those who are underprivileged in all respects and therefore rely on their hope and faith more than those who are satisfied with their privileged position, affluence, and health and, consequently, would prefer to see the world without surprising paradoxes and changes. In addition to the open-mindedness of the audience, we must be aware of an inevitable emotional turn. True, the audience was sorrowful over its sociopolitical oppression, but it was also exposed to the extraordinary joy of those whom Christ had healed and their relatives. Thus, two emotional extremes, sorrow and joy, characterize the audience described by Matthew.

The openmindedness of Christ's audience had its limits, however, for the religious tradition of the Jewish nation was its major cultural determinant. The people to whom Christ addressed His sermon were faithful and pious Jews, although most of them were not educated like the scribes and some Pharisees but were eager to listen to a new teacher: "And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan" (Matt. 4: 25). They came from all parts of the country and not only for healing. To some degree their openmindedness can be detected in their willingness to travel a considerable distance in order to hear a new teaching, and at the same time their eagerness testifies to their religious devotion. We can hardly detect in these crowds any trace of either skepticism or indifference to the religious tradition.

The crowds listening to Christ firmly believed in one invisible and loving God, creator of the universe and life, who had chosen the Jewish nation for His purposes in the world, and had made a covenant with this nation concerning its present righteousness and future deliverance from pain and suffering by the promised Messiah. This faith was based on a multitude of acts and verbal communications between God and

His people, transmitted by the prophets and recorded in the Scripture. Probably anyone among the Jews at that time, even the most ignorant or intellectually inept, was conscious of these religious fundamentals, saw him- or herself under the rule of God, who had guided the Jewish nation in the past, who expected righteousness in the present, and who had promised a future totally controlled by His will. Thus, the crowds listening to Christ's sermon evidently regarded their present lives as included in the divine plan for the chosen people, as well as the future, as being not so much the result of historical progress as of God's will. The planning of the future was not in human but in God's hands, and, therefore, any speculations in regard to the personal or national future could not be as pervasive as in our days. The future was regarded as being under God's control while the prophets revealed some of its features.

The type of righteousness that was demanded by God of His chosen people is quite relevant to the present discussion. There is a clear tendency in many maxims of the religion of Christ's contemporaries to reduce the effect of the struggle for survival and, therefore, to liberate the believers from the anxiety of death. In the Decalogue and in observation of the Sabbath and the sabbatical year, in respect for the elderly and in the care of the poor and unfortunate, there is a consistent effort to control the forces of the struggle for survival, of self-expansion, and self-protection. The day of the Sabbath and the notion of a sabbatical year are especially significant. Every seventh day a righteous Jew had to stop worrying about material wellbeing and security and to devote his or her entire time and attention to an invisible God in whose hands the destiny of the individual and the nation rested. To put the future into the hands of an invisible God demands considerable fearlessness in regard to all the threats and dangers of the empirical world, and, therefore, the rules of the Sabbath were constantly attacked, distorted, and adjusted. The great controversies on the subject of the observance of the Sabbath are convincing testimony that this particular detail in the Jewish religion touched the most sensitive nerve in the human being, namely, the urge for security.

The sabbatical year, although never fully observed, was an even more radical attempt to change the code of existence of an entire nation, transforming its economic, and with it, its social structure. Every seventh year the major indicators of the economic superiority of

one person to another had to be eliminated: debts were erased from the books, and slaves were liberated. Moreover, nature was released from its enslavement by human beings: fields, vineyards, and orchards, had to lie fallow; they were not to be sown and harvested. The gifts of the land were given to the birds and animals, and the earth was given a rest.

Paradoxically, on the day and in the year of God, who was regarded as the only source of life and security for the Jewish nation, the struggle for survival, prosperity, and security, had to cease. In this religious system the urge for security, the clear result of the anxiety of death, was not endorsed by God; rather, He was opposed to the anxiety of death, opposed to the inclination to allow death to infiltrate human existence. Thus, Christ's audience was exposed to the most fundamental paradox — God's demand that His chosen people, being mortal, act like immortals, ignoring the perils of temporal existence. This paradoxical construct of thought was probably shared in various degrees by all the listeners of the Sermon on the Mount, and they tolerated this paradox on the personal, socio-political, and religious levels.

This Weltanschauung informed the present examination of the Sermon on the Mount. I felt that in adopting this world view along with the personal outlook and socio-political position of the people in Christ's audience, I might at least to some degree approach the code of perception expected and aimed at by the Speaker. It was with this devotion and humility that the crowds on the slopes of the mountain perceived Christ's unusual teaching and which I adopted in examining the text. Christ's audience had very little to lose in the present; it did not regard itself in full control of its culture and institutions founded by God; it was capable of accepting paradoxical aspects of human existence; and it aspired to God's overtaking historical forces and reshaping the life of His people. To someone with this orientation none of the previously enumerated major interpretations of the Sermon on the Mount could possibly occur. All these interpretations ignore the code of perception inherent in the lower social classes of Christ's Jewish contemporaries and perceive the Sermon on the Mount either from the alleged eschatological viewpoint of the early church or from the standpoint of modern Christendom

One must address oneself to the audience's perception of the Speaker as recorded by Matthew. At the time of the sermon, He was known to His disciples and perhaps to a considerable part of the crowds as an extraordinary healer and teacher, for the message of the Sermon on the Mount, the kingdom of heaven, had been repeatedly communicated on previous occasions: "From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand'" (Matt. 4: 17). This is why the four apostles summoned by Christ before the Sermon on the Mount, according to Matthew, followed Him without hesitation. They knew what His general message was. The disciples further witnessed this teaching: "And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people" (Matt. 4: 23). Christ was followed by His disciples and by crowds who sought both His healing and teaching, but His identity and, therefore, the commitment to His teaching was not firmly established. Christ's audience perceived His teaching without any commitment and, therefore, with open minds, seeking only comprehension rather than projecting His teaching on future individual and national existence.

The ambiguity of Christ's identity and, therefore, authority at the time of His pronouncement of the Sermon on the Mount precluded any definite commitment to His teaching and, therefore, any adaptations. I accepted this perspective in the present study. In this respect the code of perception in this study differs from the code of the main interpretations, for they assume that the text is authoritative and, therefore, that its content must be adjusted to the practical needs of society, as well as of the individual conducting the analysis of the sermon. Such concern for the practical implications of an authoritative text undergoing exmaniation clearly underlies the first four interpretations as an *impracticable law of ethics*, an *unattainable ideal*, an *ethical guideline*, and a *code of discipleship*. Under the same pressure of assumed future inconvenience the seventh interpretation, *interim ethics*, seems to arise. It claims that only in light of acute apocalyptic expectations can the message of the Sermon on the Mount be seriously considered and implemented. Ironically, in our age of nuclear armaments with its rather obvious apocalyptic perspective, the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount are not practiced to the degree that could be

expected according to this interpretation. This interpretation — *interim ethics* — was obviously invented in order to undermine personal commitment to the message of the text. The remaining two interpretations were conceived apparently out of similar concern for the safety of Christendom. As was mentioned above, according to the fifth and sixth interpretations, the *Q Source* and the *didactic document*, the Sermon on the Mount is denied its historical reality, and Matthew's recording is regarded as the Evangelist's compilation. In order to escape those anxieties and fears that apparently have generated modern interpretations of the Sermon on the Mount, I have made a conscious effort to approach the text as an unauthoritative communication.

A disengagement from the culture and ideology of our own society is, of course, only partially attainable. As was stated at the outset of this chapter, we perceive a text against our own historical, cultural, and personal background. This background constitutes an intellectual trap, for it is virtually inescapable and limits our perception severely. We should, however, distinguish two basic aspects of our cultural and personal captivity: the intellectual and the emotional. We are confined to our background by the cognition of our historical and personal past and cultural tradition, but also by our emotional attachments and resentments. While the cognition cannot be eradicated, the emotional involvement can at least be reduced, and a state of impartiality, or indifference, in regard to cultural and personal values can be attained. I believe that such a state is an essential prerequisite for an openminded reading of any text, especially an ancient one, and certainly one like the Sermon on the Mount, dealing with the most fundamental aspects of human existence. Such an attitude might also be helpful to, if not mandatory for, anyone who chooses to read the following study.

Still, the discussion of my ideological position would remain incomplete without adding a few words about my religious background, which doubtlessly has influenced my present work. I belong to the Orthodox Eastern Christian tradition, have studied and contemplated it, and, no matter how persistent my efforts at detachment have been, Eastern Christianity certainly has informed my reading of individual parts in the Sermon on the Mount. It was perhaps exactly the Eastern Christian tradition that made my detachment from cultural values easier.

4. The Authorship and the Structure of the Sermon

Modern scholarship has erected yet another obstacle between the communication of the Sermon on the Mount and the contemporary reader. We must return at least briefly now that the main aspects of the code of perception have been outlined, to the scholarly claim that the Sermon on the Mount is simply the Evangelist's fabrication (interpretations five and six).

The communicative act of the Sermon on the Mount is recorded by Matthew so comprehensively, though concisely, that to question whether the act of Christ's communication took place can hardly be justified. Matthew refers to Christ's previous sermons and their main theme − the kingdom of heaven − also central to the Sermon on the Mount; he outlines obliquely, but with sufficient clarity, the socio-economic character of Christ's audience as well as its previous exposure to and, therefore, the psychological effect of Christ's healings. Matthew's inclusion of a description of Christ's audience and its reaction to the sermon indicates the code and the context of the crowd's perception. As a matter of fact, Matthew offers information about all the essential factors of communication, a fact that supports the authenticity of the scene, and makes fabrication of it most unlikely. The question is really not so much whether Christ delivered His sermon in a particular setting but rather whether Matthew's text of the sermon, although abridged, represents Christ's authentic communication.

If we accept this narrowing of the problem, that is, exclusively to the content of the recorded text, there is only one reliable way to approach this question, namely, to allow the text to speak for itself and to listen to it without any preconceptions. While discussing the authorship of the sermon, we cannot ignore the fundamental difference between an author and a compiler. While the author produces all the components of the text and organizes them into a system with maximal control of the meaning and implications of all individual components and thus perfectly interrelates them, the compiler, who most likely cannot appreciate as fully the meaning of the individual components, for they are not his own creation but are borrowed from another source, cannot produce a perfect system of interrelations unless the compiler becomes an author. On the other hand, an author can con-

struct his text according to his intentions having ideally an unlimited supply of material produced within his or her creative process, while the compiler is limited by the material assigned or chosen as the source of the compilation. It appears that the ideally unlimited supply of material as well as perfect comprehension of all its parts and details must result in a superior structure of the text. Thus, the original text of the author doubtlessly would differ in structure from the text of the compiler.

In regard to the Sermon on the Mount, its abruptness, alleged disorganization, and extreme brevity were used as essential evidence for the theory of compilation (interpretations five and six).* These characteristics, among others, must be examined by a thorough structural analysis of the text in order to discern whether the Sermon on the Mount is a version of an authentic sermon of Christ's or only the Evangelist's or an early Christian compilation. Thus, we may assume that consistent structure in the Sermon on the Mount, if convincingly established, could testify to the fact that the text represents a version of Christ's authentic communication, rather than a compilation.

In order to undertake this investigation, we must assume that the Sermon on the Mount represents a single communicative act in the indicated setting and code; only then can the structure of the text be examined according to the theory and the analytical methods of structuralism. It is also assumed that this pronouncement of Christ is authentic and that it reached the Evangelist either in a reliable oral and/or written version. Therefore, Christ Himself is regarded as the Author and the Speaker of the text for the purposes of the present structural analysis.

As we can see, this structural analysis of the Sermon on the Mount has a double purpose: it addresses the problem of Christ's authorship and His delivery of the sermon as one communication and, further, the message of His pronouncement. It is assumed that a tight structure of the text would indicate Christ's authorship in contrast to an alleged compilation by Matthew, while such a structure would also disclose the message of the text. Both aims must be achieved by the same

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* Martin Dibelius, *The Sermon on the Mount*, Charles Scribners, 1940, pp. 15 – 16.

examination of the text, since the structure of this text is expected to reveal both the authorship and the message.

The reader must be warned, however, against exaggerated expectations of undeniable proof beyond the scope of this study. Personal acceptance of the Sermon on the Mount as Christ's major and authentic manifesto will always depend on the individual's disposition. The above-mentioned fears and concerns presumably underlying the major interpretations of the sermon may remain paramount in regard to its acceptance by any one person or its incorporation into any particular school of thought.

There is, however, a tangible contribution that we may expect from the following structural analysis of the sermon. Should this analysis suggest that the text represents an authentic, although abridged, pronouncement of Christ, the intellectual intimidating effects of major authoritative interpretations of the sermon could perhaps be reduced, and those inclined on the basis of their spiritual experience to accept the authenticity of the sermon could find an alternative to the prevailing skepticism about the authenticity and the message of the sermon. Such an option could perhaps assist some in finding guidance and support in the Sermon on the Mount, for it would permit at least listening to this communication without the threat of being labeled ignorant, backward, or fanatic. Furthermore, should the structural analysis of the Sermon on the Mount suggest the authenticity of the text, a more productive and spiritually nourishing discussion of it could, perhaps, begin.

5. Method of Analysis

The structuralism that I have used in my literary studies for the last fifteen years or so* regards any artistic or literary text as a closed

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* I would recommend to an interested reader the following works: Robert Scholes, *Structuralism in Literature*, Yale Univ. Press, 1974; Terence Hawkes, *Structuralism and Semiotics*, University of California Press, 1977; two books by Juri Lotman, both published by the University of Michigan Press, *Semiotics of Cinema*, 1976, and *Structure of the Artistic Text*, 1977; and Roman Jakobson, *Selected Writings*, vols. 3 and 5, Mouton Publishers, The Hague, 1979. The first two works offer further bibliography.

system of interrelated signs. As the ideal text consists of only necessary, functional, in other words, communicative components, there is no detail or fragment in an artistic text that a structuralist scrutinizing it analytically can afford to ignore. An artistic text, like any utterance in our primary language, is a coherent system of signs. As in everyday communication every word contributes to the significance of other words in the communication, so do all the individual components in an artistic text contribute to and, therefore, modify the significance of other components. Consequently, an artistic text can be regarded as a system of signs, usually referred to as the secondary language of the text, in which, in the case of verbal art, the primary language is the material. Any part of the primary language may assume a new meaning and become a sign in the secondary language of the particular text, provided this part meaningfully interacts with other signs.

The boundaries of an artistic text are flexible. We can regard individual stanzas of a poem as text, of course, keeping in mind that they constitute in their entirety the text of the whole poem. Similarly, a fragment of a painting can be a text, which is part of a larger text, the whole painting, which may be part of an even larger text, the artist's exhibition. Thus, the limits of a text can be broadened or narrowed.

Another complex factor in structuralism is the notion of a sign. It is defined as something that stands for something else within the addressee's perception. In the context of this discussion "something" belongs to the primary language of the artistic text, while the "something else" is part of the secondary language. Thus, signs transfer the reader from the primary language to the secondary language and modify the semantics of the primary language, altering but not eradicating its semantics.

How is the significance or semantics of a sign within an artistic text ascertained by a structuralist? The answer is surprisingly simple: repetitions of all kinds and on various levels serve as the major vehicle for the critic's comprehension of the semantics of the secondary language. The repetitions, or recurrences, within an artistic text are, of course, not so much repetitions of entire units or phrases, like a refrain in a song, but rather of segments, or fragments of given units. Therefore, dissection is one of the major methods of a structuralist.

Recurrences can be expected in all domains of an artistic text –
in single thoughts, notions, concepts, emotions, images, sounds, and
grammatical forms. A recurrence leads the critic to both the discovery
and the interpretation of a sign. If all the artistic media are considered,
we may assume that there is nothing that could not be used by an
artist as a sign in an artistic text, provided he finds a way to interrelate
this component in a meaningful way with other components of the
text.

The way that the significance of an individual sign within an artistic
text is established by the critic can be explained by the notion of a
paradigm, which simply means a sequence of components interrelated
by similarity and contrast. Most artistic texts contain a multitude of
paradigms. The individual components of a paradigm occur in an
artistic text sporadically with larger or smaller amounts of material,
containing components of other paradigms, inserted among them. The
components of a paradigm are held together not by their proximity
within the text but by their similarity, while their differences or con-
trasts contribute to the meanings of individual signs and the entire
paradigm. Thus, each paradigm contains an invariant and a multitude
of variants. As an example, let us take a character, the protagonist in
a novel. All his appearances, disconnected within the textual space,
constitute a paradigm, individual components of which are united by
their similarity, or invariant, that is, the name of the protagonist. All
these components differ, or have their variants, because the protagonist
in each of his or her appearances acts differently under new circum-
stances and in new interrelations. These cumulative variants convey
the significance of the paradigm, in this case the nature and function
of the protagonist of the novel. Thus, the significance of the protagonist
is found in his or her paradigm.

The ordinary reader establishes the significance of a paradigm
intuitively, while the structuralist establishes this significance in its
specifics and therefore can examine it as well as reliably substantiate
an interpretation. The paradigmatic structure, lying along the vertical
axis of the text, may include all concepts, ideas, descriptions, and so
on, as well as the rhythm, sound, lexicon, and phraseology of the text.

The syntagmatic structure of the text lies on the horizontal axis. It
consists of individual syntagms, composed of two or more paradigmatic
components located in immediate proximity to each other. Thus, on

the syntagmatic axis various paradigms of the text come in immediate contact with each other. Using the same example of the protagonist of a novel, we can assume that one of the paradigmatic components appears on the syntagmatic axis jointly with the components of other paradigms, let us say for the sake of simplicity, paradigms of other characters. Thus, every scene, in which the protagonist appears with other characters will represent a joining of at least two paradigms in a syntagm. The significance of each component of each paradigm will be enriched in a complex but very specific way by the interaction of various paradigms on the syntagmatic axis. It goes without saying, of course, that the paradigms in a text are not limited to characters only and that individual syntagms do not necessarily comprise comparable paradigmatic components.

The paradigmatic and syntagmatic structure of a text could remain incomprehensible, however, should the rules of interpretation of individual syntagms or the code utilized by the author be unknown to the reader and the critic. As we have seen in the example of a fundamental communication, the phrase, "I am hungry today," can change its meaning according to the code in which it is communicated and/or perceived. An artistic text must, therefore, eventually reveal its code or codes unless an exceptional degree of ambiguity is one of the aims of the author.

Thus, the secondary language of an artistic text must be discovered by means of an elaborate method of examination, which demands that the entirety of the text be considered in a specific code or codes and that no part of the text be examined in isolation, without considering its interrelations with the remaining material. An artistic text is viewed by a structuralist as a tight system which by the interrelation of signs discloses its secondary language only obliquely and with considerable resistance. The reader is expected by the author to take part in the creative process. The reader's participation is manifested by the definite effort to penetrate the often deceptive text and to comprehend its secondary language, which may convey a message that the average reader would overlook. This struggle for the mastery of the secondary language of an artistic text, or its secondary modeling system, requires multiple readings. A structuralist considers the first reading of an artistic text not a reading at all; it is simply an elementary exposure to the text on the level of the primary language only and is not expected

to provide the reader with adequate knowledge or comprehension of the text.

The code of the text, however, need not necessarily be concealed under various structural and formal devices. The artist can break this established pattern and disclose directly the code of the text, or as a matter of fact, any characteristic of the communication. Such a disclosure usually appears in a metadiscourse, that is, in a statement in the text about the text. A metadiscourse can be misleading, of course, included with tongue in cheek if the strategy of the author demands the further confusion of the reader. In some instances, however, the metadiscourse appears simply unavoidable for establishing a common code between the reader and the author. In our everyday communication we do it quite often. For example, we comment on our statement that was misunderstood, by indicating the code: "But I was only joking"; or by identifying the speaker of the communication: "But I am your friend; you can trust me"; or by establishing the context: "But I did not know you were sick."

Obviously structuralism broadens the concept of art. It is not only aesthetics that determines the artistry of an artifact but also its type of communication. Any event communicates and contains at least some aesthetic elements. An artifact, however, according to the theory of structuralism, communicates on at least two levels: besides communicating on the level of its primary language, it also communicates on the level of its unique secondary language or languages. A textbook on calculus, a newspaper article, a code of law, or a recipe communicate on the level of the primary language only, and therefore cannot be classified as artifacts. Of course, without first investigating the nature of the communication of a text, no one can say with certainty whether it is or is not an artistic text. Thus, the critic's intuition or initial assumption can be fully accepted or rejected only after the structural analysis is completed.

The structural method of analysis was chosen for the examination of the Sermon on the Mount because it seemed to suit the material ideally. The present study is based on the assumption that the Sermon on the Mount communicates by its unique secondary language and therefore can be approached as an artistic text. It is assumed that the Sermon on the Mount can be comprehended only in its own code and that it is virtually meaningless to consider any component within this

communication in isolation from other components and the overall code, as theologians frequently have done. It is also assumed that the message of the entire discourse of the Sermon on the Mount can be perceived only from its secondary language, or its secondary modeling system.

To assess this initial assumption, we must undertake the following structural examination of this text. It is hoped the above brief sketch of the structural method of analysis, limited exclusively to the needs of the present study, will facilitate its understanding.

For ready identification all the sections of Chapters 2 – 6 begin with the particular texts under discussion. All the individual passages, or texts, are numbered from 1 to 18, and some of them are subdivided into sections designated by letters. To help the reader recall each text, each is also identified by a parenthetical, mnemonic phrase. For example, the verses in Matthew 5: 21 – 48 are designated as Text 4 (But I say to you) with six sections: Text 4 a (Anger), Text 4 b (Adultery), Text 4 c (Divorce), Text 4 d (Oaths), Text 4 e (Other cheek), and Text 4 f (Love for enemies).

Every narrative, in order to achieve clear communication must focus on its subject as sharply as possible. This work focuses on the structure of the Sermon on the Mount rather than on the long and complex history of its exegesis. Therefore, in order to avoid blurring the subject of this work, the references to and discussion of the past exegetic contributions were not included in the following presentation of the analysis of the sermon.

Important passages are quoted generously to achieve the utmost clarity, even at the risk of overburdening the exposition with quotations. For the same reason a considerable number of charts representing textual interrelations are included.

Finally, it is necessary to return repeatedly to the same texts in subsequent chapters. Structural analysis requires a simultaneous perception and overview of all the details and interrelations in the material under examination, almost impossible to present in a linear narrative. Therefore, to convey the results of structural analysis, the exposition must progress along an ascending spiral, retracing the same circle many times, but each time on a higher level. As a result, the individual texts recur but with some new observations added to the previously

established ones. These seeming repetitions are inevitable in the presen-
tation of a structural analysis of such a complex communication as
the Sermon on the Mount.

All the quotations are taken from the Revised Standard Version
(RSV) and only occasionally from the King James Version (KJV) when
the latter aids clarification of a point.

The Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount: The Beatitudes (5: 3 − 12)

Text 1 (Beatitudes) (5: 3 − 12)

beatitude 1 (Poor in spirit) (5: 3)

> 5: 3 Blessed are the poor in spirit,
> for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

beatitude 2 (Mourning) (5: 4)

> 4 Blessed are those who mourn,
> for they shall be comforted.

beatitude 3 (Meek) (5: 5)

> 5 Blessed are the meek, for they
> shall inherit the earth.

beatitude 4 (Hunger and thirst) (5: 6)

> 6 Blessed are those who hunger
> and thirst for righteousness, for
> they shall be satisfied.

beatitude 5 (Merciful) (5: 7)

> 7 Blessed are the merciful, for
> they shall obtain mercy.

beatitude 6 (Pure in heart) (5: 8)

> 8 Blessed are the pure in heart,
> for they shall see God.

beatitude 7 (Peacemakers) (5: 9)

> 9 Blessed are the peacemakers,
> for they shall be called sons of God.

beatitude 8 (Persecuted) (5:10)

> 10 Blessed are those who are persecuted
>   for righteousness' sake, for theirs is
>   the kingdom of heaven.

beatitude 9 (For my sake) (5:11,12)

> 11 Blessed are you when men revile you
>   and persecute you and utter all kinds of
>   evil against you falsely on my account.
> 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward
>   is great in heaven, for so men persecuted
>   the prophets who were before you.

The Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5 – 7, opens with the Beatitudes (5: 3 – 12), a highly structured passage. The nine beatitudes, united into one indivisible text, function in two ways: to introduce the entire sermon poetically or formally and to establish the ideology of the following teaching.

First I shall discuss the bewildering impression on the contemporary reader that these verses may produce. To appreciate the shocking effect of the Beatitudes from beginning to end, the reader must assume the perception of the listener exposed to them for the first time. The normal hierarchy of human values is inverted straightforwardly without any apology. Those qualities generally considered failures or shortcomings are treated as blessings, and those who possess them are proclaimed blessed. When told that those who are "poor in spirit" (5: 3), that is, those who do not acquire riches or who readily dispose of them, are blessed, unprepared readers may experience a certain ideological and cultural shock, for all their lives they have witnessed and have probably displayed the opposite attitude. This radical inversion of the commonly accepted hierarchy of values continues throughout the Sermon on the Mount.

The contemporary reader, who is aware in advance of the inverse value system in the Beatitudes, may escape the initial shock and, therefore, may slide over the text without analytically scrutinizing it. The reader, however, who is well acquainted with the Beatitudes usually regards this text as adequately interpreted and, therefore, may not question it either. Both readers will probably miss the unconventionality of the text. The fact remains, however, that all nine beatitudes, if attentively read, are totally unacceptable to modern

culture, as well as any civilization which advocates, not poverty, but wealth; not sorrow or mourning, but merriment and happiness; not meekness, but aggressiveness; not spiritual self-perfection, but pragmatic self-assertion; not acceptance of persecution, but the pursuit of popularity.

Perhaps the main problem with a cursory reading of the Beatitudes is that the reader does not ask a simple question: Why are all the Beatitudes so unpleasant, so painful, and even threatening to physical survival? Perhaps such a fundamental question does not arise simply because only a few do seriously intend to apply the Beatitudes to their personal lives or perhaps because a convenient answer is always ready, namely, that such is the will of God. But no matter how naive such a question may appear, we must confront it.

No matter how controversial the Beatitudes may be, they are a text of immense power and beauty and speak not only to the mind but to the whole person with his or her emotions, experiences, doubts, anxieties, and aspirations. This penetrating quality stimulates the examination of this text for some explanation of the utter incompatibility of Christ's teaching with human values in general and modern culture in particular. In this endeavor we must ask a question still not satisfactorily answered twenty centuries after Christ: What does the Sermon on the Mount mean? This question cannot be adequately posed without an attempt to analyze formally and structurally the entire text and, above all, the Beatitudes, the most obviously structured section of this discourse.

The nine beatitudes have a complex structure, part of which is obvious on first reading. They are united by an anaphora, the phrase, "Blessed are ...," followed in eight beatitudes by the third-person plural with its variant, the second-person plural pronoun, in the ninth beatitude.* Because of this emphatic unification of the text, it must be perceived as a whole, as one tight system. Each beatitude consists of two parts, for convenience referred to as the left and the right parts. The anaphora in the left part, "Blessed are ...," has its counterpart in

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* In the Greek original, as well as in the Slavonic translation, the verb *to be* in the present tense is absent except in the ninth beatitude (5: 11) where this verb appears in the second person plural. The absence of the verb *to be* conveys timeless presence.

nine right parts, which begin with the conjunction "for." In all the
beatitudes except the ninth the anaphoric conjunction "for" in the right
part is followed by the third-person plural pronoun; in the ninth it
changes to second person.

The uniformity of the Beatitudes is further evident in the balance
between the two parts in the first eight beatitudes, from which the
ninth again deviates. Each left part contains only one human quality,
which constitutes bliss, while each right part refers to one aspect of a
human being's relationship to God. The brevity of the first eight
beatitudes is especially noticeable when compared with the ninth beat-
itude, which consists of not one verse, but two (5: 11,12) and is divided
into two parts, not in the middle like the preceding eight. The ninth
beatitude contains an additional restatement of the anaphora "Blessed
are ..." at the very beginning of the second verse (5: 12), and only after
this second statement of bliss, "Rejoice and be glad ...," does the right
part appear: "for your reward is great in heaven." The ninth beatitude
violates the pattern of brevity further in its three references to human
circumstances:

> Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds
> of evil against you falsely on my account   (5: 11).

In this description of a very concrete situation rather than character
traits as seen in the preceding seven beatitudes, the possessive adjective
"my" is used, referring to the Speaker, Christ. Finally, after God's
relationship to those who are persecuted is revealed ("Rejoice and be
glad, for your reward is great in heaven"), in contrast to the previous
beatitudes a comment is appended: "for so men persecuted the prophets
who were before you" (5: 12). Thus the ninth beatitude violates almost
all aspects of uniformity established in the preceding eight and thereby
emphasizes the unifying factors of the system. Chart 1 (p. 45) summa-
rizes the above observations on the formal structure of the Beatitudes.

A few other important features in the Beatitudes might not be as
readily accessible to the reader. One of them is the time structure
partially indicated by the grammatical tenses.

The first anaphora of the left part, "Blessed are ...," refers to
present existence. The right part of the second through seventh beati-
tudes (5: 4 – 9) uses the future tense, while in the first und eighth

Chart 1. Basic Patterns in the Beatitudes

Chapter 5 No. of Verse		3 – 10	11, 12
No. of Beatitude		1 – 8	9
Quantitative differentiation		One verse for each beatitude	Two verses
		No comment	One comment: "For so men persecuted the prophets who were before you."
Left Part	Complete sequence	Blessed	
	Partial sequence	Third-person plural	Second-person plural
		Human characteristic	Human situation
Right Part	Complete sequence	for ...	
	Partial sequence	Third-person plural	Second-person plural
		Specific sign of approval	General sign of approval

beatitudes (5:3,10) the same phrase is in the present tense: "For theirs is the kingdom of heaven." These two references in the present tense to the heavenly kingdom are strategically placed at the very beginning and the very end of the larger segment of the text: they frame the central six beatitudes (5:4–9) and separate them from the concluding, ninth one. Such structuring clearly indicates that although the future tense appears in the right part of most of the beatitudes, still in regard to the heavenly kingdom the present tense remains essential. In view of this arrangement of tenses we may question whether temporality characterizes this text and whether we should not search for another

understanding of the time structure of the Beatitudes. It is not ex-
clusively the combination of two grammatical tenses that suggests this
question, but also the content of the first anaphora ("Blessed are ..."),
which obviously refers to the present poverty, persecution, and
mourning of the left parts but at the same time is semantically closer
to the bliss of the heavenly kingdom of the right parts. Since the
heavenly kingdom appears in two tenses, present and future, and also
because it is already a real blessing in the present, the transition from
present to future appears to be less essential than that from one plane,
or quality, of existence to another, from the mundane world to the
heavenly kingdom. It is not so much the question of what comes first
and what comes later, but rather what is the nature of things that
coexist in time. In the Beatitudes the heavenly kingdom coexists and
overlaps with empirical existence, and the transition from one to
another appears to be the main point of the text.

A few observations on the first eight beatitudes also lead to this
conclusion. The human characteristics presented in the left parts of
these beatitudes are universal and timeless, although perhaps rare and
inconspicuous. Poverty in spirit (5: 3), mourning (5: 4), meekness (5: 5),
or peacemaking (5: 9) are not confined to any particular place or epoch;
they are universal and timeless. It is very significant that exactly the
timelessness of these universal qualities is indicated by the anaphoric
phrase in the present tense "Blessed are ...," or in Greek simply
"Blessed ...". The universal presence, along with the universal human
qualities, connotes the everlasting presence of the heavenly kingdom,
which is realizable on earth any time and in any place and culture.
Thus, in the phrase, "Blessed are ...," followed by one of the universal
human qualities, we can perceive the simultaneity of both the temporal
and the transcendental planes of existence.

The mutual interception of different planes of reality becomes even
more evident when the comment in the ninth beatitude on God's
approval of those persecuted is fully incorporated into the discussion:
"for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you" (5: 12). It
is in the present that Christ speaks of those who are and will be
persecuted in the future for His sake, or rather for the sake of His
teaching, and equates them with the prophets of Israel who were also
persecuted and also have their reward in the heavenly kingdom. Thus,

the historical past blends with the future, and both lead to the kingdom of heaven, which is apparent also in the present.

When the Old Testament prophets are mentioned in 5:12, they join Christ's representation of the universal principle of transcendence throughout the centuries, as indicated by the preceding eight universal qualities leading to bliss. Thus, the prophets do not differ from those who are and will be persecuted for Christ's sake in the future. The historical chronology becomes irrelevant, and only various planes of human existence retain significance.

The last two beatitudes, the eighth and ninth (5:10 – 12), and their connection with the first (5:3) are especially significant. The first beatitude, one of the most complex, has caused considerable controversy. Sometimes the phrase "poor in spirit" is equated with humility and is interpreted as a blessing of those who are humble before God. Such an interpretation does not address itself to the elementary question: Why did the Speaker not refer directly to humility if this was what He meant?

The phrase "poor in spirit" unites two realms of human experience: the external "poor" and the internal "in spirit." This unity is characteristic of the entire Sermon on the Mount and symptomatically occurs at the very beginning in the first beatitude. The two parts of the expression "poor in spirit" conflict with and complement each other. There is an obvious tension between them. The word "poor" brings to mind a person deprived of the bare necessities and therefore of any security, while the phrase "in spirit" transfers this image inward and therefore seems to deny its external expression. On the other hand, while considering the concept of "the poor in spirit" as an internal state, one cannot exclude the poverty connoted by the word "poor." To regard it as a metaphor would not suffice, since what it stands for would remain unknown.

The solution comes from the acceptance of the contradiction in the expression and of the semantic interaction of its two components. On the one hand, the phrase refers to the poor person perceived externally, a person deprived of any security. On the other hand, it means a person, indeed poor, but in spirit, in personal aspirations. These two aspects interact dynamically, indicating that a deprived person must become also "poor in spirit" and one "poor in spirit" must also become

a deprived person. In other words, the external and internal aspects of this phrase are inseparable and must be perceived simultaneously. The synthesis is indicated by their phraseological unification.

The central concept in the first beatitude is poverty, the lack of any security in either the material and mental or spiritual realms. Thus, poverty is elevated to a central religious concept, acting simultaneously in both the internal and external spheres of human existence and, therefore, placed at the very beginning of the Beatitudes as a universal value and fundamental principle. All the following beatitudes must be comprehended in the light of this principle, namely, of the fundamental necessity of poverty.

The first beatitude also introduces the positive side of poverty: the possession of the kingdom of heaven ("for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," 5: 3), the absolute contrast to both external and internal insecurity. The same reversal occurs in the eighth beatitude (5: 10). This recurrence of the reversal of the temporal state interrelates the two beatitudes (5: 3 and 10) located at the extremities of the text, and calls attention to the fact that both these sayings unify the external and internal realms of existence. The eighth beatitude (5: 10) speaks of "those who are persecuted for righteousness," with persecution an external and righteousness an internal condition of human existence. This similarity of the left parts of the first and the eighth beatitudes (5: 3 and 10), suggests that poverty in spirit parallels righteousness, and material poverty parallels persecution. This parallelism and the resulting blending of poverty with persecution, further emphasizes the universal value of poverty, both internal and external. The order of these two conditions is the same in both beatitudes: at the beginning is the external ("poor," "persecuted"), then the internal ("in spirit," "for righteousness"), followed by the same right part: "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

These two parallel beatitudes, the first and the eighth (5: 3 and 10), framing six others (5: 4 − 9), separate them from the ninth (5: 11, 12), which must be regarded as their conclusion and concretization. However, while contrasting with the six central beatitudes, the ninth is closely linked with the eighth (5: 10) by the concept of persecution. The previously established pair of double components ("poor, persecuted / ... in spirit, ... for righteousness") is now augmented by the external manifestations ("... when men revile you and persecute you

and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely") and by the internal state of a person persecuted for being identified with the Speaker ("on my account," or "for my sake," 5: 11, RSV and KJV). This dual system in the three beatitudes is schematized in the following chart:

Chart 2. The Dual System of the First, Eighth, and Ninth Beatitudes

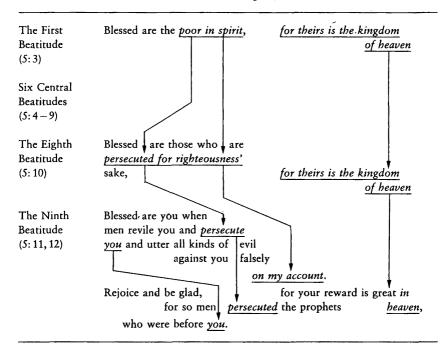|	External Indicator	Internal Indicator
Beatitude 1.	Poor	... in spirit (5:3)
Beatitude 8.	Persecuted	... for righteousness (5:10)
Beatitude 9.	Reviled Persecuted [Slandered]*	... for my sake (5:11, KJV)

The two sides of this scheme complement each other and, most importantly, each of the phrases unites two interdependent, external and internal, planes of existence. It is most important to remember, however, that in this process of establishing the dual scheme of external and internal planes of existence, the ninth beatitude equates the internal realm of human existence with the Speaker Himself, with Christ: "... for my sake" (5: 11, KJV).

The concretization of the ninth beatitude by means of the introduction of the first and second persons is immediately extended in time by the reference to the Old Testament prophets. This extension into the past occurs after the direct reference to the Speaker, and, therefore, a symmetrical time structure becomes apparent. Eight beatitudes are concerned with the human condition in the universal present tense and are formulated in the general third-person plural. Then the eighth beatitude (5: 10) introduces the concept of persecution linked with the poverty of the first (5: 3) and the persecution of the ninth beatitude (5: 11, 12), in which the initial broad perspective is narrowed by the second-person plural of its address, and by the person of Christ. Finally, the reference to the prophets introduces the historical past of the people of Israel (5: 12) so that the entire message becomes broadened again.

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* "Slander" refers to the phrase "utter all kinds of evil against you falsely" (5: 11).

The following chart represents the basic relationships pertinent to the summary of the text in the ninth beatitude:

Chart 3. The Basic Interrelations of the First, Eighth, and Ninth Beatitudes

The First Beatitude (5:3)	Blessed are the *poor in spirit*,	*for theirs is the.kingdom of heaven*
Six Central Beatitudes (5:4–9)		
The Eighth Beatitude (5:10)	Blessed are those who are *persecuted for righteousness'* sake,	*for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*
The Ninth Beatitude (5:11, 12)	Blessed are you when men revile you and *persecute you* and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely *on my account.*	
	Rejoice and be glad, for so men *persecuted* the prophets who were before *you.*	for your reward is great *in heaven,*

The sequence of equations, which transpire from Chart 3, illuminates the essence of the Speaker: all human characteristics contained in the first seven beatitudes are summarized in the eighth by righteousness, while the latter is replaced in the ninth by the Speaker. Thus, the ninth beatitude equates the human characteristics of bliss with the Speaker and defines Him by them. This identity of the Speaker is further extended into the historical past by the reference to the prophets. Because of the fundamental equation of the left part of the Beatitudes with the kingdom of heaven in the right part, the Speaker, who represents the entire left part, also represents the kingdom of heaven in the present and in the future.

The time structure of the Beatitudes closely interacts with the composition and grammar, specifically the pronominal sequence, which

stresses the general and concrete aspects of the text. The result is that the Speaker appears both historical and universal, as well as concrete and abstract, and in both dimensions is blended with persecution for His sake, that is, with persecution for righteousness and with poverty in spirit, the first, fundamental concept in the Beatitudes.

The unification of the framing beatitudes (5:3 and 10), referring to both internal and external poverty (see Chart 2), and 5:10—12, referring to the persecution for righteousness, for Christ's sake, and to Christ Himself, indicates the accord of these three basic concepts with those introduced in the remaining six beatitudes (5:4—9) and puts them into better perspective. The mourning (5:4), the meekness (5:5), the hunger and thirst for righteousness (5:6), the mercifulness (5:7), the purity in heart (5:8), and the peacemaking (5:9) contribute their own particular attributes to the general model and serve as individual illustrations of the fundamental concepts of poverty, persecution, and Christ. It does not take too much effort to realize that the poor in spirit, who do not possess and do not seek to acquire property, will be chased out of every social circle consisting of people who possess and seek to possess as much as possible, even on a modest scale. People generally congregate with those of comparable wealth, seek the company of those of greater affluence, and carefully avoid those of lesser social standing. This general pattern of human relations must inevitably turn the "poor in spirit" into perpetual outcasts. It must expose them to endless ostracism until they reach the economically lowest strata of society, in which no one has more than they. This is where the poverty in spirit eventually finds its place. The road leading to this destination is, of course, a certain type of persecution, but the most clearly definable persecution of poverty in spirit begins when the outcast has no further to go and joins those deprived of, so-called, human dignity.

It is not exclusively poverty, however, that functions as a stimulus for ostracism and, consequently, leads to persecution and annihilation in one form or another. The remaining beatitudes suggest a similar threat to human existence. Taken in their entirety, they reveal an underlying principle, or invariant, that explains their value and the real message of the text. The invariant is the utter defenselessness of the individual, who in the temporal world is necessarily exposed to

the threatening forces within human society which are generated by the so-called struggle for survival. The selection of the human characteristics in the left part of the Beatitudes clearly testifies to this effect. Those who are poor, who mourn, who are meek, who seek righteousness above all, who are merciful, pure in heart, and seek peace, as well as those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake — all have one thing in common: not conforming out of fear, they preserve their fearless attitude towards the dangers and threats of the temporal world. This common denominator separates such persons from the mass of humanity on a deeper level as well.

It has already been suggested (see Chapter I, Section 1) that self-defense and the struggle for success and power spring from the striving for security based on the anxiety of annihilation and death. Any pain, contraction, humiliation, or defeat is almost inevitably associated with weakness, defenselessness, and, therefore, in the final account, with death. On the other hand, growth, acquisition, strength, happiness, material victory, and success are associated automatically with the antipode of death, whatever this antipode may be — superiority in regard to ordinary mortals, some sort of unconscious aspiration for surrogate personal or collective immortality. It has also been suggested that the experience of pleasure and pain, so irrational and mysterious, may be based exactly on this dichotomy: anything that supports self-assertion and security appears pleasurable, while the contrasting experiences that undermine self-assertion and security provoke painful sensations and lead to suffering. This system of evaluation seems to underlie the human model presented in the Beatitudes.

As soon as the anxiety of death is disclosed, the fundamental invariant of the left part of the Beatitudes becomes clear: it is the fearlessness of death that all the blessed ones share that constitutes their bliss, their ability to realize the kingdom of heaven. From the first beatitude (Poor in spirit) to the last (For my sake) the text refers to those who do not defend themselves against threats and dangers within society and act as if these dangers do not exist or do not apply to them. Presumably, the only reason for such behavior can be their emancipation from the anxiety of death, demonstrated both internally and externally.

It is understood that emancipation from the anxiety of death entails suffering, since any exposure to the threat of annihilation produces the

sensation of pain. Therefore, the free acceptance of this pain can be comprehended only if we assume the continuation of existence after death and regard this continuation as desirable. Such a belief and desire are unthinkable without firm faith in God, eternal and good, which the audience exposed to the Beatitudes doubtlessly shared with the Speaker. The invariant of the Beatitudes, the emancipation from the fear of death, could be addressed only to an audience that sought unification with the eternal and good Creator of life.

It transpires from the structure of the text and from the unifying function of its invariant, that is, emancipation from the anxiety of death and from all its side-effects, that the Beatitudes refer to those who do not act under the pressure of the anxiety of death. Such people are blessed, "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (5:3,10). They are blessed because they are beyond the power and authority of their assumed mortality. Thus, the internal and the external aspects of emancipation from the anxiety of death create a deathfree human model in the left part of the Beatitudes and equate it with the right part − deathfree life in the kingdom of heaven.

The average person is little acquainted with poverty in the real sense except through statistics of socio-economic studies or some passages from literature. From this perspective poverty is naturally imagined basically in negative terms, as the absence of those advantages that affluence offers. Besides some pleasures and comforts the major advantage of affluence is security, and security belongs entirely to thoughts of the future, to aspirations. Thus, generally speaking, the greatest attraction of affluence lies in the feeling of security in the future. Poverty, on the other hand, is frightening mainly because it implies a lack of security.

In the first beatitude this insecurity is not only external but, far more importantly, is internally accepted, for it refers to those who are insecure practically and do not seek any security. Since this is how they are and want to be, no change can be expected in their external state. It amounts to permanent defenselessness. In the remaining six central beatitudes insecurity and defenselessness remain the main points in both the external and internal realms of the blessed.

The external and internal aspects of defenselessness are highly structured in the Beatitudes. These two aspects of the central principle

alternate and are framed by the first and eighth beatitudes, in which the external and internal merge. In the six central beatitudes the even-numbered refer primarily to internal, while the odd-numbered refer to external, insecurity. Neither of these realms is ever isolated from the other; both are present in each beatitude, as well as in the entire Sermon on the Mount, but one of them definitely predominates in each verse.

We can easily detect the difference between the predominantly internal and external beatitudes by classifying them according to their practicability in seclusion or in society. We can easily see that the characteristics of the predominantly external beatitudes cannot be practiced in seclusion. It takes contact with people for a meek person (5:5) to exercise meekness in his or her self. The same goes for the merciful person (5:7) or the peacemaker (5:9), for their qualities can be realized only in a social context. The qualities of the predominantly internal beatitudes are contrary in this respect. Those who mourn (5:4), who hunger and thirst for righteousness (5:6), and who are pure in heart (5:8) may realize these qualities during long periods of isolation from society. Thus we may regard the predominantly internal beatitudes as solitary, for they do not require direct contact with society, and the predominantly external beatitudes as societal, for without social contact they can hardly be discovered in a person.

Having introduced the notion of two types of beatitudes, one solitary or internal and the other societal or external, we must remember, nevertheless, that all beatitudes represent the intrinsic human state and deal with spiritual values. Therefore, the terms used for this examination have only relative significance, indicating only the predominant characteristics of the two types of beatitudes when compared to each other.

The two types of beatitudes may also be distinguished in quotidian life. On the external level of human existence or in practical affairs, the meek (5:5), the merciful (5:7), and the peacemaker (5:9) are relatively easy to notice. On the other hand, considerably more time and effort may be needed to notice those mourning (5:4), those hungering and thirsting for righteousness (5:6), and those pure in heart (5:8). True, the effects of these qualities must eventually become apparent to an outsider, but considerably later than those of the first three characteristics mentioned above.

Those persons with a relaxed attitude toward their rights and privileges while most members of society are guarding theirs very carefully manifest meekness (5:5). It is not necessary to challenge the meek on a serious issue; such people demonstrate their meekness or profound disbelief in their own rights and merits by their mannerisms, behavior, and certainly by their attitude toward business and career.

Meekness also has an internal aspect which should not be forgotten. A meek person does not seek respect, attention, or other advantages that could accrue because of some extrinsic force, be it aggressiveness or some legal procurement of certain privileges and rights. In the final account the meek do not appreciate respect engendered or protected by force, whether personal or legal, but rely on their own judgment of good and evil applied to their own worth. The meek regard themselves as nearly worthless and, therefore, deserving of very little.

Almost the same can be said about the merciful (5:7). Mercy is a profound indifference to the legal, professional, and traditional standards of society pressed upon the individual. While the meek do not seize upon these standards for their advantage, the merciful do not enforce them to the disadvantage of others. While the meek do not seek those rights and advantages that, according to the law and common practice, they deserve, the merciful do not insist upon or impose those disadvantages that another deserves according to the same laws and practice.

Mercifulness also has an internal aspect: the merciful person mistrusts the fairness of human law and common practice and regards those who fail to meet the demands of society or profession as still worthy of existence, even though such an attitude might be disadvantageous in a practical sense. Thus, as in the case of the meek, the internal worth of a person is stressed, but with one difference: the meek reduce their own worth, while the merciful elevate the worth of others. Both sacrifice some of their security for their principles.

The beatitude of the peacemakers (5:9) actually summarizes the two preceding beatitudes of the predominantly external realm of existence. To achieve or to make peace, meekness – the state of no ambitions, the avoidance of struggle for rights and privileges – is necessary, as well as mercy, the state of not denying another person's advantages and privileges that common sense would dictate this person did not deserve. Both the meek and the merciful achieve peace by

personal sacrifice, by the reduction of their own security. The peace-makers are those who give in, who concede or compromise what is contested.

On the internal plane the peacemakers, like the meek and the merciful, do not believe in their rights, in human justice, in common practice, but value most highly peace, and for this value they sacrifice their rights, their success, and finally their security. In both ways, externally and internally, the seventh beatitude (Peacemakers, 5:9) is a summary of the third (Meek, 5:5) and the fifth (Merciful, 5:7). Thus, these beatitudes can be reduced to one invariant: the renunciation of security.

The beatitudes of the prevailing internal aspect of human existence alternate with the predominately external beatitudes and form a se-quence of complementary concepts.

Those who mourn (5:4) live in perpetual disengagement from the fundamental beliefs and aspirations of their society and culture. Aware of its vanity and fallaciousness and being by this view isolated from the majority in their environment, still they do not close their eyes, do not suppress this awareness, but mourn for their fellow human beings. It is a courageous way of existence, since the internal isolation that it entails, even before outsiders detect it, requires considerable intellectual and spiritual effort to retain their own principles and continue to view the world accordingly. This path precludes self-assertion in the common manner − joining the festivity of human existence, being popular with many friends, and so forth. On the contrary, the awareness of the futility of human aspirations and efforts makes commonly accepted pleasures unpleasant, commonly shared interests uninteresting, and commonly accepted values worthless. Furthermore, those who mourn for their society do not share the optimistic belief in progress and the ability of society to solve its problems. The future of society for those who mourn its dedication to false values, its idolatry, is bleak and ugly. Such a painful view of human existence makes a person aware of the insecurity of a society and culture regarded by others as the safest, most secure place in the world.

This internal aspect of the second beatitude must sooner or later surface. Mourning for the fallacy of commonly accepted values eventu-ally becomes apparent from the person's tastes and lifestyle. Not participating in popular aspirations and activities is the reliable

symptom of their inner rejection. As soon as society notices this nonconformity, the security of such a person on the practical level begins to diminish.

The theme of inner insecurity continues in the fourth, predominantly internal beatitude referring to those "who hunger and thirst for righteousness" (5:6). While in the second beatitude (5:4) those who mourn for society must be aware of the fallaciousness of human ideals and aspirations, those who seek righteousness must be aware of their own fallaciousness and idolatry. Thus, both beatitudes imply a mercilessly realistic assessment, first of society and then of the self. The resemblance between those who mourn and those who hunger and thirst for righteousness is most evident in their insecurity, for self-confidence demands self-righteousness, assurance of one's ethical and spiritual perfection, which precludes self-criticism or any effort at improvement. The opposite state, the awareness of one's falsity, is a state of painful questioning of self-worth. Such questioning can hardly be associated with the security of smugness and selfrespect.

The seeking of righteousness cannot remain unnoticed forever. A person seeking righteousness cannot follow the commonly accepted patterns of behavior and action, and the radical disparity between the values of such a person and the prevailing values of society must eventually become apparent.

The sixth beatitude, "Blessed are the pure in heart ..." (5:8), places purity at the center of a person's spiritual and intellectual faculties, the heart. Purity becomes the dominant quality of the person; God's truth and good, is in this case all that this person focuses on. In a way, the sixth beatitude (5:8) is the culmination of the primarily internal beatitudes, the second (Mourning, 5:4) and the fourth (Hunger and thirst, 5:6), for they refer to a high spiritual standard. It is maintained without any compromise despite the regrettable state of both society and the individual which causes respectively mourning (5:4) and the hunger and thirst for righteousness (5:6). In the sixth beatitude this standard becomes the only content of a person and dominates the heart.

A special vision of the world and society is suggested by this beatitude. When a person is so filled with the awareness of God's omnipresence and life-giving benevolence, a certain type of immunity to the evil of the world results. The pure in heart are aware of evil

but do not expect it, do not focus on evil, but rather only see it in the contrast of the world, including themselves, to the absolute good in God. Therefore, evil is not frightening, but sorrowful.

This inner state must have as its outward expression extreme unsophistication, naiveté, childishness. Such a person remains inexperienced in confronting evil, does not register evil acts, does not accumulate knowledge of evil, and does not become experienced in defending against it. The imperfection of the world is insipid for such a person preoccupied with the radiant presence of God. Such a person does not enjoy gossipy or slanderous conversations, is not preoccupied with people's failures or imperfections, and therefore cannot participate in social life, professional competition, and self-defensive schemes. The three predominantly internal beatitudes have one invariant – the aspiration to a high spiritual standard, which tends to reduce security in practical terms.

The observations above demonstrate how tightly the nine beatitudes are structured. Two sections – the first beatitude (5: 3), symmetrically located at the beginning – and the eighth and ninth beatitudes (5: 10 – 12) at the end – combine both external and internal features (see Chart 2). Furthermore, the predominantly internal and external beatitudes alternate, framed by the first and the eighth, together with the ninth at the end.

The alternating emphasis on the internal and external in the left parts of the six central beatitudes (5: 4 – 9) divides them into two paradigms. Furthermore, because of the regular alternation of their components, these paradigms create three syntagmatic pairs, each of them comprising one internal and one external beatitude. These structural aspects of the six central beatitudes are presented in Chart 4 (p. 59).

The above examination of the Beatitudes reveals their unity in both form and content. It is virtually impossible to separate form from content in this tightly structured text, for the form conveys the content while the content conditions the form. In respect to the internal and external predominances in the Beatitudes, we can observe that they are not juxtaposed to each other but rather are unified by their consistent alternation and syntagmatic pairs. Thus, while the two contrasting concepts are established in the text, by virtue of their distribution they are blended into a new and more

Chart 4. Alternating Emphasis in the Left Part of the Beatitudes

No. of Verse	No. of Beatitude	No. of Pair	Internal Predominance	External Predominance
4	2	1st pair	those who mourn	
5	3			the meek
6	4	2nd pair	those who hunger and thirst for righteousness	
7	5			the merciful
8	6	3rd pair	the pure in heart	
9	7			the peacemakers

complex unity. A human being is presented with both the internal and external, or solitary and societal aspects of existence, but these two aspects are fused into one, so that they become totally inseparable within their interaction. The external invariant of renunciation of security is justified and explained by the internal invariant of aspiration for a high spiritual standard.

The syntagmatic structure of the six central beatitudes, apparent in three consecutive pairs, allows further penetration into the secondary language of the text. The six beatitudes seem to be hierarchically structured on three levels, each represented by one of the pairs (see chart 4). This hierarchy can be detected according to the degree of acceptability of the particular pair of beatitudes to society or according to the degree of conflict between the given pair and the prevailing ideology conditioned by the anxiety of death and the striving for practical security.

In dealing with the hierarchical structure of the six central beatitudes, we must consider four points:

1. To what degree are the characteristics of a particular pair of beatitudes clearly recognizable as religious behavior, and, if so, can it be identified with repudiation of the anxiety of death and acceptance

of the principle of the Beatitudes or the kingdom of heaven, that is, fearlessness in regard to contraction, suffering, and death?

2. To what degree is the particular type of promoted behavior practically harmful to the security, institutions, and progress of society?

3. Should the particular characteristics threaten society, would this threat be mainly practical or ideological?

4. How would society most likely react to the behavior promoted by the particular pair of beatitudes?

In discussing these four points, we must again adopt a rather artificial approach, namely, to examine each of the six characteristics separately despite the fact that the Beatitudes refer to a person who possesses all of them. However, the Beatitudes introduce the characteristics one by one and therefore allow the examination of each individually.

The question could be raised whether the conflict between society and those who possess the characteristics of the Beatitudes is not simply an assumption, a sort of preconception. The Beatitudes themselves contain a clear answer on this point.The eighth beatitude refers to those "who are persecuted for righteousness' sake" (5: 10) and, therefore, not only justifies but demands this assumption.

The classification of the six central beatitudes as predominantly internal and external has already demonstrated a certain hierarchy. The last beatitudes in each sequence (the sixth and the seventh) appear to be most forceful and constitute a pair with similar right parts directly referring to God: "for they shall see God" (5: 8), and "for they shall be called sons of God" (5: 9). Thus, the third pair, comprising the two summarizing beatitudes, is valued the highest.

On the other hand, the first pair within the six central beatitudes, the second (Mourning, 5: 4) and the third (Meek 5: 5), must be placed on the lowest hierarchical level. They exhibit attributes that can easily be confused with characteristics alien to any religious code or spiritual state. The meek and those who mourn can easily appear, on the one hand, as weaklings or cowards, and, on the other, as those deprived of any optimism or humor or simply too sentimental. The meekness, a profound disbelief in one's own rights, can be erroneously taken for the inability to assert these rights, while mourning for the idolatry of society and suffering in the world can easily be confused with a psychological defect, melancholy, or depression, without any spiritual

overtones whatsoever. Such people are hardly popular and successful, but they must not necessarily be regarded as not conforming to the prevailing world view. Thus, those who are meek and who mourn may not be identified with any ideology or faith (point 1).

As far as their threat to the security of society and its institutions goes (point 2), those referred to in the first pair impose very little danger. They may be inefficient, unambitious, indifferent in their work and occupation, rather than outright harmful. Amidst other workers and members of any group they may be a practical nuisance, but still they may be at least tolerated, for they do not represent either a practical or ideological threat (point 3). The meek and the mournful are most likely to be regarded with some degree of pity or irony, with mockery, if not outright abuse. The role of the village idiot may be assigned to them (point 4).

A different situation faces those of the second pair, referred to in the fourth beatitude (Hunger and thirst, 5:6) and the fifth (Merciful, 5:7). These two characteristics are easily taken as signs of righteousness within the given religious norm accepted by society. As long as this righteousness remains on purely religious grounds and does not interfere with the established social and economic order, it is most likely to be not only tolerated but even respected. Should, however, the hunger and thirst for righteousness and mercifulness transgress the rigid limits imposed by social and economic security, the adherents to the second pair of beatitudes might find themselves under severe assault by society. In this case they would be treated as religious fanatics, for the religious bent of their aspirations would be obvious to everyone. Thus, in regard to point 1 of this examination the behavior indicated in the second pair of beatitudes cannot be confused with personal defects as the attributes of the first pair could, and must be identified with some religious code in its extreme version.

In the affairs of human institutions this spiritual and intellectual bent must most likely be regarded as suspect and practically intolerable (points 2 and 3). Any economic, political, or social body expects from its members considerable tolerance for so-called necessary evil as well as mercilessness in regard to the opponents of the given institution or group. In regard to these demands those who seek righteousness and are merciful will probably prove to be uncooperative. Therefore, those with a special zeal for righteousness and mercy will most likely be

removed from their professional and social positions and will be subjects of ostracism (point 4).

The last pair of the central beatitudes, the sixth (Pure in heart, 5: 8)` and the seventh (Peacemakers, 5: 9), is not as easily confused either with a person's disposition or abnormality, as was the first pair, not with exaggerated devotion to generally accepted religious standards, as was the second pair. The third pair of beatitudes exhibits a direct challenge to the prevailing ideology.

Purity in heart, as was previously shown, signifies a certain one-sidedness in perception of the world if compared with the world view of the average person. Those who are pure in heart are not preoccupied with the evil and seem to be unaware of the dangers of the temporal world. Such notions as self-defense and self-protection, competition, and struggle for survival remain outside their frame of reference. Their lives represent the implementation of an ideology radically opposed to that of society. The pure in heart actually ignore the notion of destruction and death.

Not so remote from the temporal world are the peacemakers. They are well aware of the perpetual warfare between individuals and nations generated by the struggle for survival. Beyond their own repudiation of competition they advocate by personal example and all other means available the termination of the struggle of each against everyone else in personal, economic, political, and international spheres of human existence.

Both those who are pure in heart and those who seek peace at any cost manifest an ideology that cannot be interpreted in any other way than as a radical denial of the axiomatic conviction that no one can survive in the empirical world without struggling with others and that for this reason this struggle is just, fair, and virtuous. Therefore, society is likely to identify, perhaps unconsciously or instinctively, the adherents of the third pair of beatitudes with the principle of the repudiation of the anxiety of death (point 1). Such a repudiation of the main principle of human existence appears to the average person as an outright challenge to the security of the individual and society.

The threat of the purity in heart and peacemaking to society is obvious (point 2) and basically ideological (point 3). The adherents of the third pair of beatitudes either ignore or give in to any aggression or evil assault, and, therefore, they exhibit total immunity to the

paramount force that shapes human existence, the anxiety of death with all its side-effects.

Those who are not prepared to deal with evil or to struggle for their security and perhaps for the security of others as well, do not even enter the arena of competition for material success. Therefore, there is no need to remove them physically or to ostracize them like those representing the second pair. However, accepting the spiritual world view of the third pair of the central beatitudes must appear highly dangerous to society, for it could cause erosion of common values with all the consequences. For the perpetuation of the commonly accepted ideology of competition, self-defense, and struggle against everyone, society must protect itself against the pure in heart and the peacemakers by discrediting their ideology (point 4). It is for this reason that those unaware of the dangers in the world, like the pure in heart, may easily be branded as irresponsible, and those actively practicing and advocating peace may be labeled traitors. Furthermore, the adherents of the third pair of the central beatitudes may be the subjects of more vicious slander – they may be accused of being parasites or enemies of societies, not patriotic enough and simply destructive in regard to such generally worshipped notions as civilization, progress, the well-being of families, or national pride.

In summary, within the three pairs of central beatitudes the first pair (Mourning, 5: 4; and Meek, 5: 5) contains attributes least objectionable to society, which might respond with ridicule and abuse. On the other hand, the third pair (Pure in heart, 5: 8; and Peacemakers, 5: 9) exhibits the characteristics most objectionable to society and may provoke retaliation on an ideological level, that is, slander. The pair located between these extremities (Hunger and thirst, 5: 6; and Merciful, 5: 7) represents an intermediary situation in regard to the objectionability of the attributes and the reaction of society. This reaction may be predominately physical removal or ostracism.

The described reactions of society are, of course, considerably simplified and point only to three basic types of suppression and retaliation: personal ridicule or defamation, physical removal or ostracism, and ideological defamation or slander. One reaction does not preclude the others, but one will usually be the initial one and therefore will predominate. The hierarchy of the central beatitudes ascends from the first to the third pair and can be schematized as follows:

Chart 5. The Hierarchical Order of the Six Central Beatitudes

Level	Appearance	First Pair	Second Pair	Third Pair	Reaction
3	Ideological confronta- tion			The pure in heart, the peacemakers	Ideological defamation or slander
2	Exaggerated righteous- ness		Those who hunger and thirst for righteous- ness, those who are merciful		Physical removal or ostracism
1	Personal defect	Those who mourn, those who are meek			Personal ridicule or defama- tion

The hierarchy within the six central beatitudes shows that ideological defamation is the highest degree of social retaliation and that those who are subject to it are elevated in the right parts of these beatitudes by direct references to God: "for they shall see God" (5:8) and "for they shall be called sons of God" (5:9).

The syntagmatic axis in the Beatitudes acquires the most significance in the last, ninth beatitude (5:11,12), which has the greatest unifying power of the entire text. Though the ninth beatitude consistently adheres to the formal and structural patterns of the preceding ones, it contrasts with them. It is longer than the others and contains in the left part three entries instead of one. Further contrasting features are the reference to the prophets, the address of the audience in the second-person plural, and the phrase "on my account," the metadiscursive reference to the Speaker, that is, Christ Himself (see Charts 1 – 3).

The most important feature in the ninth beatitude is the combination of the three attributes in the left part with the reference to the Speaker.

They seem to summarize the characteristics of the pairs (see Chart 5) of the six central beatitudes (5: 4 – 9), and identify them with Christ.

The attributes of the first pair of beatitudes (5: 4 and 5) concerning the meek and the mournful, as we have seen, may provoke contempt, for both qualities can easily be confused with weakness or cowardice, which in the generally accepted value system of competition must be regarded as inferior traits. Furthermore, since a weak or cowardly person may appear to be a kind of emotional cripple, scoffing, mockery, outright abuse, or personal defamation can be expected of those who mourn and who are meek. According to the ninth beatitude, such people might be exposed to revilement.

The second pair of beatitudes (5: 6 and 7) concerning those who hunger and thirst for righteousness and those who are merciful, as was shown, is potentially damaging to the practical affairs and institutions of society, and, therefore, the adherents of this pair are most likely to be mistreated and ostracized. In the ninth beatitude they become the subjects of persecution.

The third pair of beatitudes (5: 8 and 9) referring to the pure in heart and the peacemakers does not so much directly endanger the practical affairs of society and its institutions, but rather, as was shown, the false values and the commonly accepted ideology of individuals, as well as of society as a whole. To protect itself against those who provoke undesirable ideological quests, society may slander them as a way of undermining and challenging their world view. This slander, or ideological defamation, is rendered in the ninth beatitude by the phrase "... utter all kinds of evil against you falsely."

The ninth beatitude unmistakably refers to the three pairs of beatitudes 5: 4 and 5; 6 and 7; 8 and 9. The direct relationship between these pairs and the ninth beatitude can be clearly traced in their order of appearance and the perhaps strange wording. Why exactly does the word "revile" appear? Why exactly does the phrase, "Utter all kinds of evil against you falsely" – slander, in other words – occur? There are many other splendid ways to handle undesirables. The ninth beatitude, however, is not meant to catalogue such possibilities; its function is to summarize the six central beatitudes in the new context (society) and new criterion (retaliatory reaction).

The six beatitudes and the three attributes in the ninth beatitude could have been ordered differently. The text, however, orders the

characteristics in the six beatitudes as a system of three pairs, while the three attributes in the ninth beatitude are ordered in such a way that they obviously refer to the pairs. Thus, three carefully chosen sequences tightly interrelate the entire text and the ninth, concluding beatitude. The last beatitude reiterates both the paradigms of the left and the right parts of the six central beatitudes with the significant addition of the reference to the Speaker and the Old Testament prophets.

As shown on Chart 2, the phrase in the ninth beatitude, "on my account" (RSV) or "for my sake" (KJV) (5: 11), referring to the Speaker, is tightly linked to the first beatitude (Poor in spirit) and the eighth (Persecuted). In this linkage the reference to the Speaker parallels the notion of righteousness in the eighth beatitude. At this point a significant relationship between the eighth beatitude and the six central beatitudes must be clarified.

The eighth beatitude, shifting the attention from human characteristics to the reaction of society (persecution) obviously refers to human attributes by the phrase "for righteousness sake" (5: 10), summarizing all the preceding human characteristics in the notion of righteousness. As soon as this interrelation is established, righteousness undergoes further transformation in the ninth beatitude where it is conveyed by the metadiscursive reference to the Speaker in the phrase "on my account" (5: 11). Thus, righteousness and the Speaker Himself are synonymous in the language of the Beatitudes.

Having realized the semantics of this two-step identification of human characteristics via righteousness with the Speaker, we must see that the ninth beatitude with the reflection of the six central beatitudes in the three retaliatory reactions of society acquires further significance. It refers two times to the six central beatitudes; first in the utterance "Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely" and secondly in the phrase "on my account" (5: 11). The first reference is structured according to the retaliatory reactions of society to the adherents of the beatitudes, while the second reference is made according to the content of these adherents, which are the six human characteristics summarized as righteousness, and equated with the Speaker, Christ. Thus, the ninth beatitude summarizes the entire preceding text on three levels simultaneously: first, on the level or righteousness, or the Speaker, Christ;

second, on the level of the retaliatory reaction of society to those exhibiting this righteousness, or Christ; and third, on the level of God's love for those who let Christ manifest through them and therefore are subject to retaliation – "for your reward is great in heaven" (5: 12). Finally, this present reality is projected onto the historical past in the concluding phrase: "for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you" (5: 12).

The ninth beatitude, reiterating the previously listed characteristics and equating them to Christ, establishes His universality and also establishes Christ as the principle of the heavenly kingdom. The six central beatitudes organized along the paradigmatic axis are represented, as well as augmented, in the ninth beatitude on the syntagmatic axis.

The function of the first and eighth beatitudes (5: 3 and 10) is identical. They are interrelated by their simultaneous reference to both the external and internal human condition; by their sharing of the same right part of the formula, "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"; and by their positions in the text. The Beatitudes consist of two sections. While the first beatitude introduces the paradigmatic section of the text consisting of the six central beatitudes, the eighth introduces the syntagmatic section of the text, consisting of the ninth beatitude, which itself is a summary of the entire text. This composition of the Beatitudes is shown on Chart 6 (p. 68) with the correspondence of the three retaliatory reactions of society in the ninth beatitude to the three pairs of the six central beatitudes indicated by arrows.

The ninth beatitude, the summary of the entire text, equates it with the Speaker and, therefore, actually turns into a metadiscourse, a comment within the text on the text and in this case a comment of the Speaker on Himself as well, Christ historical on Christ universal, on His principle of the kingdom of heaven. The metadiscursive function of the ninth beatitude goes even further than that. Because of the established identity between Christ and His discourse, as well as between Christ and the kingdom of heaven, His utterances must also be identified with the kingdom of heaven. In this communicative system of mutual inclusion, the entire text of the Beatitudes becomes the model or verbal icon of Christ and of the kingdom of heaven, while the ninth beatitude, reflecting the six central ones, their present bliss which constitutes the kingdom of heaven, functions as the Speaker's comment

Chart 6. The Interrelation of the Two Sections of the Beatitudes

No. of Verse	No. of Beati-tude	No. of Section	No. of Pair	External Predominance	Internal Predominance
3	1	Intro. 1		... poor..................	... in spirit
4	2		1		... those who mourn
5	3			... the meek ...	
6	4	Sec. 1	2		... those who hunger and thirst for
7	5			... the merciful ...	righteousness
8	6		3		... the pure in heart
9	7			... the peacemakers ...	
10	8	Intro. 2		... those who are persecuted............	... for righteousness
11	9	Sec. 2		Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely..	... on my account

on Himself and his principle. While Christ utters the Beatitudes, He is also the content of His utterance and thus communicates or reveals Himself to the audience. Christ is both historical when He speaks on the mountain and extrahistorical in His speech in the Beatitudes. This fact accounts for their complex time structure. Christ speaks of Himself

on several planes of reality, planes that coexist, overlap, and mutually intercept. The time structure and the Speaker in the Beatitudes are extratemporal, extrahistorical, and universal. Thus, the structure of the text indicates that the text and the Speaker are identical.

The two sections of the Beatitudes outlined in Chart 6 reveal the thematic composition of the text essential for its comprehension. The line separating the first section from the second also separates the beatitudes concerning human qualities from those concerning the hostile and retaliatory reaction of society to those qualities and those manifesting them.

According to this subdivision of the text, two negative reactions are indicated. The first section reveals the negative reaction of a person to the prevailing behavior and value system of society by the paradigm of the attributes contradicting the defense mechanisms conditioned by the anxiety of death. The second section of the Beatitudes concerns the retaliation of society against those who react negatively to its values. Thus, a four-step progression becomes apparent: the realization of the domination of the anxiety of death over human existence; the refusal to yield to it by those referred to as blessed; the hostile reaction of society to them as evidenced in the second section; and the benevolent reaction of God to them as indicated in the right part of the Beatitudes. These four steps are united by their constant presence in the text and by the repeated references of one to the other and each to all. These four steps comprise a model of the human condition.

From Chart 6 we can conclude that because of the structure of the text each beatitude corresponds to all the others, that each section of the text contains the other section, that each individual beatitude is equal to the whole, and, vice versa, the whole is equal to each separate beatitude, and that the entire text acquires this dynamics of interrelation from the function of the ninth beatitude, the only one that refers directly to the Speaker. Consequently, the ninth beatitude could stand for the entire text if such an extraction would not destroy the structure and, therefore, the meaning of the Beatitudes. Nothing can be removed from this system and viewed in isolation.

The text of the Beatitudes is thus a perfect unity resembling an organism. This conclusion is drawn only on the basis of an examination of the left parts of the Beatitudes. The right parts must still be analyzed.

The right part of each beatitude deals with the reason for the bliss of those named in the left part. However, reading the Beatitudes as cause and effect or good works and rewards would be a gross simplification. Their time structure is too complex for such an anthropomorphic perception. Rather than a sequence in time, the Beatitudes should be perceived as the concurrence of two planes of existence. The state referred to in the left part of each beatitude coexists with the state represented in the right part, and, moreover, the right and left parts are realized simultaneously.

In beatitudes $1-5$ ($5:3-7$) the right parts relate on the primary language level concretely to their left parts. The heavenly kingdom belongs to those who are poor in spirit ($5:3$); thus poverty turns into its opposite. The pattern repeats in the following beatitudes: those who mourn shall be comforted ($5:4$); those who are meek and therefore do not have their place in the world shall inherit the earth ($5:5$); those who hunger and thirst for righteousness shall be satisfied ($5:6$); and those who are merciful shall obtain mercy ($5:7$). Here this consistency ends, however, and a new pattern begins, indicating that the coherent correlation between the left and right parts is as real as the infinite distance between human existence and the heavenly kingdom.

Beginning with the sixth beatitude, the right part refers to a state that does not relate on the primary language level directly to the corresponding left part: the pure in heart "shall see God" ($5:8$), and the peacemakers "shall be called sons of God" ($5:9$). The eighth beatitude ($5:10$) introducing the second section of the Beatitudes repeats the right part of the first beatitude: "theirs is the kingdom of heaven," and then in the ninth beatitude the entire right paradigm is summarized in a new formula: "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven" ($5:12$).

The significance of the notion of "reward" should not be exaggerated, however. The five beatitudes mentioned above ($5:3-7$) with a coherent interrelation between their left and right parts establish not so much a relationship of reward but rather of result. This result is, on the one hand, coherently linked to the human qualities of the left parts and, at the same time, is infinitely greater, as the two beatitudes referring to God in their right parts ($5:8$ and 9) indicate. Thus, the notion of reward in the last beatitude is a threefold concept: a logical

and commensurable result, a result beyond any logic or limit, and a result granted by God.

The relationship between the left and the right parts of all the beatitudes is a system of inverse equity, according to which those qualities subject to suppression in the temporal realm of existence generate the highest possible state of bliss and identify those blessed with the kingdom of heaven and God. This system of inverse equity dominates not only in the Beatitudes, but is consistently reiterated in the remainder of the Sermon on the Mount.

While the same individual notions appear on both sides of some beatitudes, the paradigm of the right parts indicates that heavenly bliss is absolute and incomparable to the human attributes in the left paradigm. The kingdom of heaven is simultaneously very close and infinitely distant from the human qualities which lead to it. It coexists with, as well as follows in time the state referred to in the left parts of the Beatitudes.

The very boundlessness of each of the right parts of the beatitudes indicates that all these parts are equal to each other, for the differences between them are incomprehensible. There is no sense in speculating on the difference between those who attain the kingdom of heaven (5: 3) and those who inherit the earth (5: 5) or whose hunger and thirst for righteousness will be satisfied (5: 6) and those who will obtain mercy (5: 7) or those who will be called sons of God (5: 9). All these entries in the right part of the Beatitudes are equal to each other in their incomprehensible boundlessness and also contain each other. Thus, on the right side of the Beatitudes one reality is expressed in eight synonymous formulae.

This homology of the right paradigm of the Beatitudes has a potent, unifying effect on the left paradigm. The equation of nine individual human attributes or states in the left part to one single reality in the right part indicates that all the human attributes of the left part are equated to each other and are virtually the same. Thus, as all the entries of the right part contain each other, so do all the human characteristics of the left part reiterate and comprise each other. This means that the poor in spirit (5: 3) also inevitably mourn for the idolatry and suffering of the world (5: 4), are also meek (5: 5), also seek righteousness (5: 6), are merciful (5: 7), are pure in heart (5: 8), and seek peace (5: 9). Moreover, it also means that those with all these

characteristics are inevitably reviled, persecuted, and slandered for righteousness, that is, for Christ's sake (5: 10 – 12). Thus, the homology of the right parts of all nine beatitudes blends them into one single reality. In the left part of the Beatitudes a definite human model represents those who seek to penetrate the kingdom of heaven while still existing within the realm of death. Thus, the structure of the left part of the Beatitudes represents only one single reality, equated to one boundless reality in its right part, and blends these two realities or models into a verbal icon of the timeless kingdom of heaven.

The time structure of the heavenly kingdom is summarized in the ninth, the most significant beatitude. The last sentence, "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven" (5: 12), reiterates the first anaphora "Blessed are ..." with a significant addition, however. The state of bliss in this world, referred to in the first anaphora, must be recognized and must generate the rejoicing and gladness that the message of the Beatitudes makes possible. The conclusion of the Beatitudes with its two imperatives, "... rejoice and be glad," repeats in a real sense Christ's teaching, previously condensed in Matthew 4: 17: "From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'" The two imperatives indicate that one must recognize, accept, and rejoice in the proximity and actual presence of the kingdom of heaven. This new state of bliss is possible only after the old way of existence under the anxiety of death is repudiated, that is, after repentance, after changing the code of existence. The heavenly kingdom both penetrates temporal existence and extends into the future, which conjoins with the present ("... for your reward is great in heaven ...," 5: 12) and at the same time incorporates the past ("... for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you," 5: 12).

In this threefold structure temporality *per se* dissolves. Boundaries of time and limitations of space disappear, and reality, or the heavenly kingdom, is revealed – it is always and everywhere for those who seek it; in other words, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (4: 17). The everlasting and omnipresent kingdom of heaven is the only content of the right part of the Beatitudes – its invariant, which repeats and reflects the left part of the text, equated with the Speaker in the last syntagmatic, ninth beatitude.

The invariant of the left part of the Beatitudes is its utter incompatibility with the basic demands for security and the struggle for survival. As in the right paradigm the invariant is the heavenly kingdom – immortality – so in the left part the invariant is the free renunciation of security and the voluntary self-removal from the struggle for survival. The selection of the human characteristics in all the beatitudes testifies to this effect. This renunciation of self-defense is the refusal to exist under the tyranny of the anxiety of abasement and, consequently, of death. The paradigmatic and syntagmatic structures of the left side have shown that it is Christ in His historical appearance and in His very essence and meaning that unifies all the beatitudes into one system, one belief, one way of life. The principle of fearlessness in regard to death, as the structure of the Beatitudes reveals, is the principle of Christ, or Christ Himself. According to the right part of the Beatitudes, this principle transforms empirical existence into life in the heavenly kingdom. Christ intermediates between the left and the right paradigms and unites them, as the structure of the ninth beatitude indicates. By applying Christ's principle within temporal existence, a person establishes in the present the death-free, transcendental life of the kingdom of heaven. Thus, while being still mortal, a person can by repudiating mortality realize deathless life, or immortality.

The ninth beatitude and its function in the text are crucial for understanding the Beatitudes: it summarizes and unifies the left part of the text and interrelates it with the right part. This interrelation is based on the principle of Christ, which is present in both the left and right paradigms of the text. The ninth beatitude, metadiscursive in its essence, transforms the entire text of the Beatitudes into a revelation concerning the essence of Christ Himself.

It is significant that in the left part of the beatitudes God is not mentioned at all. The reference to God appears only in the right part of the text. This difference can be explained by the fact that the basic theme of the left part of the text is the relationship to the empirical world and to mortality. Therefore, the left part of the Beatitudes can be correctly perceived only against the background of human existence under the tyranny of the anxiety of death, the emancipation from which identifies human beings with the principle of Christ and leads them to immortality or to God in the right part of the Beatitudes.

The above can also be observed in the physical setting of Christ's teaching on the mountain, as presented in Matthew. Christ sat on a hill; His disciples approached Him; and below, on the slopes of the hill, was an amorphous mass of people. Thus, at one extreme was Christ; at the other, the crowd; and in between, the few disciples. Christ spoke to both — to His disciples and to the crowd, that is, to those who had already left the masses and to those who were still amid the crowd.

Thus, the physical setting for the sermon represents a threefold system. The crowd on the slope mirrors the present state of humanity under the rule of the anxiety of death. Christ in His historical appearance and His disciples represent the fearless rebellion against the authority of death. The kingdom of immortal life, represented by Christ universal and His speech or communication, comprises the third component, human immortality in the kingdom of heaven.

The Beatitudes, the first segment of Christ's sermon, reveal also human nature and the nature of the empirical existence of man. The invariant of the left part of all the beatitudes — renunciation of the anxiety of death — connotes the feature that distinguishes humanity — the anxiety of death, subordination to this anxiety and, therefore, to the power of death itself. The audience was brought face to face with not only one reality, that of the kingdom of heaven, but also with that of human existence under the tyranny of the anxiety of death. The audience was, therefore, left with one alternative: to continue to exist dominated by death and to pursue the struggle for survival or to rebel against the authority of death and embrace life and Christ.

The Remainder of Matthew 5

Text 2 (Salt and light) (5: 13 – 16)

5: 13 You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltness
   be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and
   trodden under foot by men.
14 Your are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid.
15 Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it
   gives light to all in the house.
16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and
   give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

The introductory Beatitudes are followed by four verses (5: 13 – 16),
Text 2, constituting a tightly organized system, a concise comment on
the preceding text, its effect on the audience, its significance, and its
relation to humanity, the universe, and God. Text 2, though separated
from the Beatitudes by the discontinuation of the two anaphorae,
"Blessed are ..." and "... for ...," is connected with the Beatitudes by
continuation of the notion of bliss in the form of the opening state-
ments: "You are the salt .." and "You are the light."

In Text 2 the addressee is pictured in two contrasting ways – as
"the salt of the earth" (5: 13) and as "the light of the world" (5: 14) –
and, at the same time, as salt that "has lost its taste" (5: 13) and as a
lamp put "under a bushel" (5: 15). Thus, Text 2 contains a fundamental
dilemma for a person – whether to fulfill a certain function or abandon
the task, to be salt with its power or to become salt without its
function, to be light illuminating the environment or to become light
under cover and, therefore, not serving its purpose. The oscillation
from one extreme to the other characterizes those who were at the
foot of the hill listening to Christ's Beatitudes and who were confronted

with the choice either of continuing their existence under the rule of
the anxiety of death or of rebelling against this rule and incorporating
into their existence the principle of Christ and the heavenly kingdom.
Thus, Text 2 may be regarded as Christ's comment on the effect upon
the general audience of His revelation in the Beatitudes. Those who
have received it, by this very fact become "the salt of the earth" and
"the light of the world," on the one hand, or, on the other, can lose
their savor and hide their light.

The radicalism of this antithesis is extreme: Text 2 connotes that
it is not possible to lose Christ's revelation, just as it is not possible
for salt or light to cease to be such. Even if the functions of salt and
light are not fulfilled, the relationship of the agent to its faculty is not
denied but is reversed by a grotesque transformation into unsalty salt
and lightless light. The other possibility of regarding salt without its
taste as some other substance and the light under the bushel as not
being light is apparently not even considered. The permanent state of
being an agent, disregarding whether its expected function is fulfilled
or not, seems to be an important part of the message. Therefore, in
Text 2 the metaphors of salt and light remain in force in both their
positive and negative forms. In this context we must confront the
question: to what specific human state do the dual metaphors refer? It
seems the only answer is that the metaphors signify the cognitive
faculty, since knowledge remains whether it is applied or not. More
specifically, in the context of the Sermon on the Mount, the salt and
light can signify only the revelation of the Beatitudes. Consequently,
we may assume that Text 2 is addressed to those who, though aware
of the revelation of the Beatitudes, have not yet committed themselves
to it.

The firmness of the cognizance of the revelation of the Beatitudes
also indicates that Christ classifies His message as the most fundamental
and revolutionizing knowledge concerning human nature and immor-
tality. The fundamental character of His message, first offered in the
Beatitudes, allows Him to call His audience "the salt of the earth" and
"the light of the world."

These images facilitate further analysis of the structure of Text 2,
which contains three paradigms. The first consists of positive signs
directly referring to the message of the Beatitudes: the salt (5:13), light
(5:14), an unconcealable city (5:14), lamp on a stand (5:15), light

shining before men (5: 16), and good works (5: 16). The second paradigm consists of two signs referring to those rejecting the revelation conveyed in the Beatitudes: salt deprived of its saltiness (5: 13) and light under a bushel (5: 15). The third paradigm consists of realms of existence, or location, in the universe: earth (5: 13), outbound (5: 13), world (5: 14), the house (5: 15), and heaven (5: 16).

One syntagmatic sequence is repeated twice in the text; it consists of the phrase "You are . . .," followed by one of the references to the Beatitudes, the salt or the light, and then replaced by a contrasting state: salt without saltiness and light that does not illuminate.

Thus, the left part of the Beatitudes is signified in Text 2 by the first paradigm of salt and light including the good works. The rejection of the revelation of the left part of the Beatitudes is paralleled in Text 2 by the second paradigm of saltless salt and lightless light.

This parallelism with the Beatitudes is further augmented by the third paradigm of the location in the universe. While in the Beatitudes the relation between the left and right parts was limited to the individual (from the present bliss of an individual to entrance into the heavenly kingdom), in Text 2 the signifiers of the left part of the Beatitudes are projected outward from the individual, establishing the person's relationship to the universe: "The salt *of the earth*" and "the light *of the world*." This is the function of the third paradigm of location, in which the words "earth" and "world" broaden infinitely the significance of those who have accepted the revelation of the Beatitudes. The significance of such persons is pictured as being of cosmic dimensions and is emphasized by the phrase: "A city set on a hill cannot be hid" (5: 14).

The dramatic increase in the significance of those who have experienced the revelation of the Beatitudes should not be surprising, since the universality of their left part has been established and is related to the invariant of self-emancipation from the authority of death, and acceptance of Christ's principle of the heavenly kingdom. These concepts, constituting the essence of the Beatitudes, are so fundamental that when Christ comments on His Beatitudes in Text 2 and projects His revelation cosmically, He only restates perhaps more directly what previously He conveyed obliquely.

In the new system of Christ's teaching in Text 2, the self-emancipation from the tyranny of the anxiety of death affects not only the

individual, by securing personal bliss in the present and deathless life, but also the entire universe. Both metaphors of Text 2 identifying the listener with "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" support this cosmic reading of the text.

The broadening of the text from human to cosmological dimensions raises the question of the relationship of Christ's teaching to society. The fact that some contract or deny themselves for the benefit of society is not indicated in the Beatitudes at all. Utilitarian considerations remain alien to their message. In other words, it may simply appear in the Beatitudes that those who attain a state of bliss do so exclusively for their own benefit. In the most simplistic terms, such an effort could be regarded as selfish and, therefore, could fail to meet the supposed standard of self-contraction advocated in the Beatitudes. We could claim, in other words, that those who ignore self-interest should also be expected to serve society rather than to seek the heavenly kingdom for themselves.

The reply to this claim can be found in Text 2. There those who have accepted the revelation of the Beatitudes are said to serve humanity and, furthermore, the entire universe. The first paradigm unifies the phrases "You are the salt of the earth" and "You are the light of the world" with the explanatory conclusion, in which the salt and the light are equated to "good works" as the empirical representation of God. Being revealed to humanity by this medium, He will be glorified, that is, followed: „Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (5: 16). Thus in Text 2, which comments on the Beatitudes, the most essential service to humanity and to the universe of the blessed is clearly stated and defined as an apostolic service to society.

The selection of the metaphors of salt and light is most significant. In Text 2, the central idea and the structure require some precious substance or agent to be equated to the person aware of Christ's revelation. Gold might be expected to serve this purpose, but gold, symbolizing riches, would conflict with the first, introductory beatitude, "Blessed are the poor in spirit ..." (5: 3). Salt and light perhaps were selected because they represent two necessities of human existence. In all probability, for Christ's audience salt signified the main preservative of food while light is necessary for human cognition. The

elements of this pair, one indispensible mainly for human physical needs and the other predominantly for spiritual growth, repeat one of the basic structural features in the Beatitudes – the alternation and pairing of the external and the internal.

The salt and light, however, have a further significance in Text 2. Neither can be reduced to any other substance and thus cannot be replaced. Nothing can salinize salt just as nothing can replace light in order to illuminate darkness. Therefore, if salt loses its saltiness and light cannot illuminate, there is no substitution for them: "... if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltness be restored?" (5: 13); "... Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel" (5: 15). The basic character of salt and light recalls the Beatitudes, in which the invariant of the left part represents the absolutely basic anxiety of death and emancipation from it. The two basic forces in human existence – submission to the authority of death and self-emancipation from it – are respectively analogous to the saltless salt or lightless light and to the salty salt and the shining light. The salt and the light, likewise, signify the fundamental and irreducible invariant – the revelation of the Beatitudes.

The following examination of the interrelation of the Beatitudes with Text 2 focuses upon the individual's relationship to society. The crucial verse for this discussion is the final one in Text 2: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (5: 16). The progression from the light to the good works culminates in the glory to God. The light signifies cognitive capacity, which in the framework of the Sermon on the Mount definitely refers to the revelation of the Beatitudes, the immediately preceding part of the sermon. Thus, the notion of "good works" is a direct function of the word "light" referring to the Beatitudes. The overall linkage between the Beatitudes and Text 2, strongly suggests that all the human qualities in the former are equated with the "good works" that must "shine before men." The human qualities from poverty in spirit to purity in heart, peacemaking, or acceptance of persecution for Christ's sake, have a common denominator, or invariant, of an intrinsic nature, namely, the renunciation of the anxiety of death and of the preoccupation with the struggle for survival. In Text 2 this internal state acquires also its external manifestation in "good works." Accordingly, poverty in spirit (5: 3) presumably would

lead the followers of Christ to the dispersion of their wealth among the poor; mourning for the evil in the world (5: 4) would lead them to alienation from the prevailing way of action, from self-protection to protection of and service to others; meekness (5: 5), to abnegation of the followers' rights for the benefit of others; the search for righteous-ness (5: 6), to acts of selfless service to others; mercifulness (5: 7), to acts of mercy; purity in heart (5: 8), to the unawareness of enemies and, therefore, to benevolence toward them; peacemaking (5: 9), to the renunciation of self-interest for the sake of peace; and the last two beatitudes (5: 10 – 12), being the summary of the preceding ones, lead to all those good works for Christ's sake representing actually a more concise model of the preceding beatitudes.

At this point the last link between the Beatitudes and Text 2, namely, the interaction of their conclusions, becomes clear. The last beatitude, referring to persecution for Christ's sake and summarizing the six central beatitudes (see Chart 6), is reflected in the concluding verse of Text 2. Exposure to persecution for Christ's sake signifies "good works," which are the testimony of God's presence in the world and lead others to the acceptance of God. This acceptance of God and His revelation expressed in the Beatitudes is placed in a cosmic context by the third paradigm in Text 2, indicating that those following Christ's principle of the heavenly kingdom assist the entire universe in escaping the laws of mortality and partaking of deathless life in the kingdom of God. Thus, the metaphor equating a follower of Christ with "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" in the full context of both the Beatitudes and Text 2 signifies a universal transfiguration.

We cannot miss, however, further implications of the third paradigm of location when regarded in its interrelation with the first paradigm signifying the principle of the Beatitudes. The life-sustaining functions of salt and light attain a special significance when projected onto the earth and the world, for this projection connotes that the world remains alive and safe only as long as it contains its life substances, light and salt, provided the salt remains salty and the light illuminates. Thus, the security of the world and society depends not on its self-defense mechanism, but on exactly the antipodal model of human existence, that indicated in the Beatitudes – self-contraction and defenselessness. Thanks to those who are the salt and the light, humanity continues its existence. In this respect Text 2 as a comment on the Beatitudes

establishes a historical-philosophical model with a very special hier-
archical system, according to which those barely noticeable rejects of
society, adherents of the Beatitudes, constitute the security of humanity
and the world. If they are saints, it is on them that humanity rests.

Text 3 (Old law) (5: 17 – 20)

5: 17 Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come
not to abolish them but to fulfill them.

18 For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a
dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished.

19 Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches
men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them
and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20 For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and
Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Verses 17 – 20, Text 3, constitute the second postscript to the
Beatitudes and simultaneously elaborate on the first postscript, Text
2. The two central phrases of Text 2, "the salt of the earth" and "the
light of the world," can be perceived in two ways – literally, as in
this study in their full cosmological dimensions, or metonymically, with
"the earth" and "the world" reduced to humanity and, therefore, "salt"
and "light" referring to the most spiritually enlightened nation. The
latter interpretation, the easier one, might suggest that Christ spoke at
that time about the people of Israel. Their law and prophets of the
Old Testament, now perhaps challenged by Christ, could be viewed as
the context of the audience's possible reactions to His discourse. To
these possible, though not exclusive, qualms of His audience Christ
addresses His first statement in Text 3 (5: 17) and further elaborates
on it in the following three verses (5: 18 – 20).

Text 3 is divided into halves, each of them containing the clause
"for truly, I say to you ..." (5: 18) and "For I tell you ..." (5: 20).

The first half (5: 17, 18) is

Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come
not to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven
and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all
is accomplished,

and the second half (5: 19, 20) is

> Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches
> men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them
> and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell
> you unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you
> will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

The symmetry of the verses containing the initial conjunction *for* indicates that each half of Text 3 begins with a statement made in the first verse (5: 17,19) followed by the explanation in the second verse (5: 18,20). Beneath this surface structure, however, there is a substratum of close interrelationship between the two first verses and, consequently, the two second verses of each half of the text.

The first half of Text 3 begins with the statement that Christ came to fulfill the law and the prophets (5: 17), and the first verse in the second half of the text (5: 19) reveals that whoever fulfills all of these commandments "shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Thus, the verses introducing the two halves of Text 3 allude to the attainment of a certain standard. Furthermore, in each of these verses a certain violation of a norm is also mentioned: "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets" (5: 17) and "Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so ..." (5: 19). The two first verses repeat a pattern: a certain norm is violated, and then the attainment of the same standard is focused upon.

In the broader context of the first three texts of the Sermon on the Mount, the Beatitudes and Texts 2 and 3, there are two givens: the law of the Old Testament (the religious background of Christ's audience) and the Beatitudes projected onto this background and commented upon in Text 2. In Text 3 Christ's first statement, "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets" (5: 17), refers to the religious background of the crowd and the disciples and projects the revelation of the Beatitudes onto it by His claim of fulfilling the law and the prophets: "I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them" (5: 17). Thus, the existing religious norm and the revelation of the Beatitudes at this point are blended in the act of fulfillment.

The fulfillment of the law is the key concept in this text. The law is necessary as long as it is not fulfilled; however, as soon as a legal system is outgrown by ethical progress, that is, fulfilled, it becomes superfluous. In the first verse (5: 17) Christ says that He has come to

bring a new system which, while absorbing the old law, replaces it with a new revelation. There is no opposition in the first verse; there is no negation — there is only a transition from one plane to another in the application of the same values, the same principle.

The commandments mentioned in the first verse of the second half of Text 3, "Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments ..." (5:19), can be found only in the Beatitudes and Text 2. Otherwise Christ would simply have stated in the initial verses of the two halves of text 3 (5:17 and 19) that He came to fulfill the old law to its last detail, and the reason for beginning His sermon with the elaborate system of the Beatitudes would be totally incomprehensible. The location of Text 3 within the sermon clearly indicates that the commandments in verse 19 signify the Beatitudes.

This reading of the text is supported by three additional considerations. In verse 5:18 Christ states that the old law will remain in its fullness until the end of the world. This can be understood only in the sense that the old law will be incorporated into a new system, since its present form is modified to some degree in the verses (5: 21 – 48) immediately following Text 3.

It is also clear from Christ's last explanatory statement (5:20) that the old law must be superceded by a new system, for the entrance into the kingdom of heaven is on condition of having exceeded the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees, who were the champions of the old law.

Finally, and most significantly, verse 5:19 refers not to a legal system with a great number of regulations, but rather to a model, which relies on the intrinsic state of a person, and, therefore, on a spontaneous, perhaps effortless, implementation of the new teaching. A legal system requires a conscientious effort to abide by every single regulation, while a model of behavior, relying on a new consciousness, is implemented more or less in its totality, since all its details accord with the new state, or nature, of the person.

In verse 19 Christ states that His teaching brings a person to the kingdom of heaven in either case — in case of complete self-identification in theory and practice with the new model, as well as in the case of some inadequacy of theoretical and practical accord with this model. Christ speaks about understanding this model (referred to by "teaching") and applying it (referred to by "doing"). Comprehension

and application are both indispensible for the realization of a model. A legal system does not require comprehension of its rationale; application is all that is demanded by law. Therefore, in verse 19 the reiteration, "Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so ..." and "he who does them and teaches them ...," referring to partial or complete comprehension and, consequently, realization, describes the adaptation of the model revealed in the Beatitudes, which incorporates the old law.

Most importantly verse 19 indicates that the Beatitudes is a complex structure, a human model, and that as a model it must be taken in its entirety, according to a person's capacity.' It is in verse 19 that the acceptance of the beatitudinal model is proclaimed as the highest degree of righteousness, while acceptance of this model, even only partially, demonstrates cohesion with Christ's principle of the kingdom of heaven.

Most important to this discussion is the difference between the law and the model in regard to their effect on the addressees. While law is usually perceived as the entirety of human obligations and responsibilities, a modeling system represents an ideal which, in the context of the Sermon on the Mount, an individual should strive for. The law puts limited and specific demands on an individual, while the modeling system demands limitless effort and, most importantly, demands human creative participation in the realization of the model as fully as the individual is capable. One may summarize this difference by saying that a legal system is rather minimalistic but a modeling system rather maximalistic. On the other hand, when law strives for maximalism and becomes exaggerated in its details, it turns counterproductive, for without personal participation an individual finds him or herself under an unbearable pressure. A model, however, allowing an individual to participate creatively in its realization, adjusts itself to the capability of the given person.

Text 3 establishes the juxtaposition of a modeling and a legal system. Law, being more specific and therefore more secure, is replaced and superseded by a model which requires personal decision and self-examination. Thus legal security, as any practical security, is denounced, as it was in the Beatitudes, and the advocates of legal security, the scribes and Pharisees, are denied the access to the kingdom of heaven. The security of law is regarded in Text 3 as an antipode to the Beatitudes.

Text 4 (But I say to you) (5: 21 – 48)

Text 4 a (Anger) (5: 21 – 26)

5: 21 You have heard that it was said to the men of old, "You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment."

22 But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother shall be liable to the council, and whoever says, "You fool!" shall be liable to the hell of fire.

23 So if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you,

24 leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your, brother, and then come and offer your gift.

25 Make friends quickly with your accuser, while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison;

26 truly, I say to you, you will never get out till you have paid the last penny.

Text 4 b (Adultery) (5: 27 – 30)

27 You have heard that it was said, "You shall not commit adultery."

28 But I say to you that every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

29 If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell.

30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

Text 4c (Divorce) 5: 31, 32)

31 It was also said, "Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce."

32 But I say to you that every one who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, makes her an adulteress; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Text 4 d (Oaths) (5: 33 – 37)

33 Again you have heard that it was said to the men of old, "You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn."

34 But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God,

35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.

36 And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black.

37 Let what you say be simply "Yes" or "No"; anything more than this comes from evil.

Text 4 e (Other cheek) (5: 38 – 42)

> 38 You have heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth."
> 39 But I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil. But if any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also;
> 40 and if any one would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well;
> 41 and if any one forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.
> 42 Give to him who begs from you, and do not refuse him who would borrow from you.

Text 4 f (Love for enemies) (5: 43 – 48)

> 43 You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy."
> 44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,
> 45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.
> 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?
> 47 And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?
> 48 You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Text 4 (5: 21 – 48), the longest structurally unified passage in the Sermon on the Mount, constitutes the largest part of Matthew 5. Symmetrically located at the other extremity of this chapter from the Beatitudes, Text 4 is unified by a double anaphora. Six times a pair of phrases is repeated with minor variations: "You have heard that it was said to the men of old . . .," followed by an Old Testament maxim under discussion, "But I say to you . . .," followed by Christ's elaboration on a quotation from the scripture or the oral tradition. Text 4, containing six such double repetitions, can be regarded as a closely interrelated sequence with complementary sections delivering in their entirety one single message. For the reader's convenience these six sections are designated as Texts 4 a – f:

Text 4 a	(Anger)	(5: 21 – 26)
Text 4 b	(Adultery)	(5: 27 – 30)
Text 4 c	(Divorce)	(5: 31 – 32)
Text 4 d	(Oaths)	(5: 33 – 37)
Text 4 e	(Other cheek)	(5: 38 – 42)
Text 4 f	(Love for enemies)	(5: 43 – 48).

Verse 5: 48 may be regarded as the conclusion of Text 4.

The sections of Text 4, though formally unified, differ in length and format. There are two variants: first, Christ offers His audience several examples of His new teaching (Texts 4 *a, b, c,* and *e*); second, He offers explanations (Texts 4 *d* and *f*).

The topics of the individual sections in Text 4 also differ. Some of the sections elaborate on similar topics, while others are isolated in this respect. Text 4 does not even remotely resemble any kind of legal code, but rather is a model of human behavior. To simplify, we could say that this text deals almost exclusively with sex (sections *b* and *c*) and violence (sections *a, e,* and *f*), while in the middle a seemingly unrelated topic, oaths, is added in section *d*. Thus, the selection and sequence of the topics covered in the text suggest even after first glance that it has an extralegal function.

On the other hand, one could argue that Text 4 contains Christ's comments on the law of the Old Testament, already touched on in Text 3. In some respects Text 4 does so. To this general approach belongs the interpretation of Text 4 as an attempt at internalizing the moral code of the Old Testament. Section *a*, which identifies murder with anger, and sections *b* and *c*, which equate lustful desire with adultery, suggest such a reading. The following three sections, however, do not support the interpretation of the internalization of Old Testament law, since they simply abolish or totally redirect the traditional maxim.

Unless a principle uniting the topics in Text 4 is found, an analysis is not possible. In other words, only an invariant unifying the six sections can shed light on the meaning of this discourse.

As is apparent from the distribution of the topics, section *d* (Oaths) is located in the center of the six sections. The first three sections bear on only two topics, for sections *b* and *c* deal with almost identical issues. Thus, thematically Text 4 is reduced to five sections with section *d* in the middle.

In the center of Text 4 a significant change occurs in Christ's comments on the quotation from the Old Testament. While in His previous comments He radically reinterpreted the maxims, in section *d* He openly nullifies the quoted maxim. Following the quotation, "You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn" (5: 33), we may expect, according to the pattern established in the three preceding sections, Christ's comment suggesting truthfulness,

not only under oath, but always. Here, however, He formulates His comments differently: "Do not swear at all ..." (5: 34). Thus, truthfulness recedes into the background, and swearing *per se* comes under scrutiny. This new strategy of commenting constitutes a turning point in Text 4 and can be traced in the following sections *e* and *f*.

All these idiosyncrasies of Text 4 are represented in the following chart with the arrows indicating the topical similarity of various sections.

Chart 7. The Composition of Text 4

Section	Verses	Position	Topics	Format	Relation to Quotation
a	21 – 26		anger	examples	reinterpretation
b	27 – 30		adultery	examples	reinterpretation
c	31, 32		divorce	examples	reinterpretation
d	33 – 37	central	oaths	explanation	nullification
e	38 – 42		other cheek	examples	nullification
f	43 – 47		love for enemies	explanation	nullification
	48	conclusion			

Chart 7 demonstrates the special position and function of section *d*, and, therefore, we may hope to find in this section the invariant unifying the six sections.

The practice of swearing at that time distinguished between more and less binding oaths. The more closely the oath referred to God, the more binding it was. In Christ's comments four formulae for swearing are listed in descending order and are metonymically identified with God. Thus, all of them were binding to various degrees. Christ, however, instead of condemning the existing classification of oaths,

condemns swearing altogether. The seeming illogic of the comments in section *d* offers after closer examination the key to the general idea of Text 4.

The structure of section *d* is fivefold:

1. In the beginning the quotation from the Old Testament appears to demand absolute truthfulness from a person:

> Again you have heard that it was said to the men of old, "You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn." (5:33)

2. Then comes Christ's abolition of the entire practice of swearing:

> But I say to you, Do not swear at all (5:34).

3. Four examples of swearing follow immediately:

> ... either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black (5:34 – 36).

4. Then the concluding formula for any statement is offered:

> Let what you say be simply "Yes" or "No" (5:37).

5. Finally, anything that would supercede this formula of a simple "yes" and "no" is identified with the source of evil:

> ... anything more than this comes from evil (5:37).

The first segment of Text 4 *d* introduces two united paradigms: the oath and the truth. In the second segment the oath is forbidden without reference to the truth. The third segment examines only the oath, again without mention of the truth; the fourth discusses only the truth; and the last, the fifth, connotes the truth and condemns the oath. This structure of Text 4*d* is presented in Chart 8 (p. 90), where the signs + and − indicate the affirmation or negation of swearing, and the narrows the interrelation of the segments.

The demand for truthfulness appears in two interrelated segments, the first and the fourth, one with the oath and one without. The abolition of the oath appears in the second and fifth segments − in both cases without any reference to the truth. Thus, from these four segments of the text follows the affirmation of the truth and the abolition of the oath, which would suffice if the major idea were the command to speak only the truth, even without swearing or taking an

Chart 8. The Paradigmatic Structure of Text 4 *d*

Segments	Verses	Paradigm I	Paradigm II
1	33.	+ oath	truth
2	34 a*	− oath	
3	34 b − 36	oath	
4	37 a		truth
5	37 b	− oath	

oath. However, the longest and most elaborate segment, the third, centrally located, bears no direct relation to the basic idea of the remaining segments. In this segment Chriśt analyses the oath in the context of the individual's relationship to the universe and God.

Formally segment 3 (5: 34 *b* − 36) contains the explanation for segment 2 (5: 34*a*), in which the oath is abolished altogether. The explanation is composed of four formulae for swearing arranged in descending order with a pattern, from which, however, the last component deviates. The progression of the examples begins with the largest view of the universe − heaven, then narrows to the immediate human environment − earth, further narrows to the traditional symbol of one part of humanity, the people of Israel − Jerusalem, and ends with the individual. The first three formulae for swearing are forbidden because of their link to God, while this pattern does not apply to the last example in which the reason given is our total powerlessness over ourselves and, consequently, over all the preceding objects of swearing in ascending order: Jerusalem, earth, and heaven. Thus, the last example is the most essential one, for it offers the concrete reason for the abolition of the oath: our lack of control of and authority over anything in the universe including ourselves. Whatever, in other words, we would choose to swear by, it is outside our authority and power and, therefore, our swearing would represent arrogance, an attempt at self-expansion, and usurpation of authority. Furthermore, we should realistically assess our nature and place in the universe and forbear making any statements under oath, since such statements of allegedly reliable truth are beyond our competence.

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* The letters refer to the first or second sentence in a verse.

The above established message of the third segment (5: 34 *b* − 36) sheds light on the final, fifth segment (5: 37 *b*), in which anything besides "yes" or "no" is considered evil. It is not so much the swearing *per se* but rather the assumption of a greater place in the world than we really have that originates in the evil. It is the pretense of controlling reality and in this way self-expansion and self-assertion that are displayed in taking oaths and, therefore, are identified with evil in the last, concluding. segment of the text.

The contrast between the Old Testament maxim, quoted at the beginning of Text 4 *d*, and its total annihilation by Christ is glaring. It is the new demand of Christ that we free ourselves from the anxiety of death with all its symptoms and effects, such as self-inflation and the pretense of having some knowledge or authority that we do not possess. In the Old Testament this demand was not made absolute, and, therefore, the contrast between the old and the new in Text 4 is emphatically stated. The invariant of the six sections of Text 4 apparently is the demand to abandon the old way of existence in the struggle for survival and the anxiety of death, only moderated by the law and the prophets. The remaining sections of Text 4 fully support this reading.

In section 4 *a* (5: 21 − 26) Christ dissects the Old Testament commandment "You shall not kill" into two aspects of murder. He says that we should neither cause another's death nor become a murderer. In legal terms these two aspects of one act are related in time: first the murder occurs, and then the performer of this act becomes a murderer. According to section *a*, however, one becomes a murderer because of a certain attitude, such as anger, regardless of whether the murder of another person takes place or not. With this attitude the act of murder is extended in time through emotion or thought. The annihilation of a human being begins with the attitude of one to another.

The attitudes defining a murderer in this new code are two: anger and a desire to degrade another human being (5: 22):

> But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother shall be liable to the council, and whoever says, "You fool!" shall be liable to the hell of fire.

The anger and degradation of another person complement each other, for the anger is provoked by a feeling of inferiority and, consequently,

insecurity, while the degradation springs from a desire to feel superior. An assumed standard and its frustration give rise to both these attitudes. In the first case, one person expects to be secure, not threatened by another's apparent superiority, but this expectation is frustrated by some quality of the other person who appears threatening to the first one. This situation might lead to anger and hatred. In the second case, a certain standard is assumed, and anyone who does not attain this standard is either overt or tacitly degraded with some amount of pleasure, since this degradation supports the perpetrator's feeling of superiority and, consequently, security.

Both anger with and degradation of another are basic strategies of self-defense, used incessantly in the struggle for survival. Thus, in commenting on the Old Testament commandment, "You shall not kill," Christ links the struggle for survival with murder and relates this act to the fear of self-defeat and eventual demise. Furthermore, both anger toward and degradation of another are based on the individual's assumed right to disapprove of something that is beyond his or her comprehension, and therefore amounts to arrogance as does the taking of oaths in Text 4 *d*.

The two examples in section *a* support the above interpretation. In the first example (5: 23, 24), the person with a murderous attitude, struggling for survival, is juxtaposed with the only source of life and survival — God:

> So if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

This example exposes a gross inconsistency on the part of tose who bring a sacrifice into God's temple, expressing in this way trust in God's will and benevolence, yet meanwhile relying on their own force in the struggle for security.

The second example (5: 25, 26) conveys the same idea from another angle. Now the entire range of human existence is considered:

> Make friends quickly with your accuser, while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison; truly, I say to you, you will never get out till you have paid the last penny.

According to this example, we should make peace with our adversary without delay. There is no indication whether the controversy with the adversary is just or not. In any case, whoever does not make peace will be condemned; thus, both parties in all unresolved human feuds will have to bear grave consequences. Not a legal concept of justice, but rather the plane on which a human being exists is the point: the plane of death- or the plane of life-permeated existence. In this respect Text 4 *a* seems to reiterate the basic message of the Beatitudes, and because Text 4 *a* is the introductory passage in Text 4, it carries extra weight.

The essence of Christ's comments in Text 4 *a* — the projection of the Old Testament laws and traditions onto human awareness of mortality, specifically onto the internal aspects of the struggle for survival, self-assertion, and self-expansion, is further communicated by the close parallelism between the quotation from the Old Testament :

> You have heard that it was said to the men of old, "You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment" (5: 21)

and the new principle:

> But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment ... (5: 22).

Both passages end with the liability to judgment, thus equating with each other their first parts — the murder with the anger and, by extension, a murderer with a person wishing death to another. This equation poses a question, however: How can a person who in anger wishes death to another be regarded as a murderer and therefore be liable to judgment, while apparently the murder did not occur and thus there is no victim of the lethal feelings and aspirations? On the empirical level of perception this question might appear justifiable; in the language of the Sermon on the Mount, however, there is a definite victim of anger or desire for the death of another person, namely, the bearer of the destructive emotions and aspirations. It is his or her existence that becomes permeated by death instead of life; it is the perpetrator who moves closer to the domain of death and therefore performs an act of murder — of the self — while wishing in anger the destruction of another person. This self-destruction or murder of the self constitutes the judgment to which the bearer of the anger is liable.

In the language of the Sermon on the Mount the Speaker's assertion that he who is angry with his brother is liable to judgment as a murderer is neither hyperbole nor metaphor but a factual assertion referring to the essence of human existence being life- or death-permeated, according to the person's attitude to the world and his or her safety within transient existence.

Text 4 *b* (5: 27 – 30) examines the prohibition of adultery. Christ's symmetrically structured comments in this section are a case of parallelism with surplus and lack comprising the antithesis.

> You have heard that it was said, "You shall not commit adultery." But I say to you that every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

On the one hand, there is the reference to lust, the desire to possess another human being, to have pleasure, to experience expansion by such possession (5: 28). On the other hand, self-expansion is replaced by self-contraction – expressed metaphorically by the loss of an eye or a hand (5: 29 – 30). Sexual aggressiveness leading to adultery certainly can be regarded as a means of self-assertion, as proof of vitality, strength, attractiveness, self-confidence, and self-esteem. At the other extreme is self-mutilation, which would presumably result in the opposite self-appraisal. The paradox of Christ's comments consists in demanding that human beings contract their egos and risk security and safety by crippling themselves rather than increase their own self-assurance and extend themselves by the pleasure of possessing another human being.

The demand indicates that the internalization of an act of adultery is not the point. It is self-assertion that is condemned and self-contraction that is suggested. The fact that the adulterous act is shifted into its prehistory, so to speak, into lustful contemplations, supports this point. The sexual pleasure in these fantasies is not essential, but the feeling of self-assertion might very well be experienced, and this feeling may be the major aim of and reward for such lusty contemplations. The fantasy of possession might sometimes produce a stronger feeling of self-assertion than the possession itself. We may ask why then is not

sex in general condemned in Text 4 *b*, but only adultery? One answer may be that it is the new acquisition that is necessary for self-assertion, while that which is already owned is taken for granted and therefore hardly helpful in this respect.

Text 4 *c*, (Divorce, 5: 31, 32) might be regarded as a further elaboration on section *b* (Adultery) and especially in regard to sex in general:

> It was also said, "Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce." But I say to you that every one who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, makes her an adulteress; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Christ also, however, touches upon other aspects in this section. The quotation from the Old Testament tradition deals with an orderly divorce and protection by the letter of divorce for the more vulnerable party in this situation, the woman. This issue was intensely debated by Christ's contemporaries. Christ's comment, however, bypasses the legality of divorce altogether and by means of His reference to adultery incorporates this problem into the previous Text 4 *b*, for the discussion of adultery immediately precedes that of divorce.

As in Text 4 *b* the prehistory of adultery, a desirous attitude, is condemned, so in Text 4 *c* another aspect of the prehistory is highlighted, namely, the clearing of the territory for future desires. The rejection of the present marital relationship implies a desire for a new, more satisfying one, and an endless avenue of changes opens up, an avenue of perpetual improvements, for no marriage can be regarded as absolutely ideal. Therefore, Christ equates divorce with adultery as common attempts to provide novelty and thereby opportunities for self-assertion.

Text 4 *c* is structured in such a way that the quotation from the Old Testament tradition interacts with Christ's comments on two levels. On the surface the institution of divorce links these two parts of the text, but underneath, the concept of danger relates them. The function of the letter of divorce in the quotation, "Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce" (5: 31), was the protection of the woman from the whims of her ex-husband and in all probability served her interests in her future relationships with other men. Thus, the letter of divorce was fundamentally a protective document. In Christ's comment, however, the security it provides is totally annihilated by His new view on divorce, namely, that this institution

exposes the woman, as well as the man, to the danger of future adultery. Thus, the practical security of the letter of divorce spiritually endangers those involved.

Christ's comments in Text 4 *b* (Adultery) concerning self-contraction (5: 29, 30) must be applied to Text 4 *c* (Divorce). Christ does not assume that a divorced person will remain chaste. It appears that Christ views those unsatisfied with the present marital state as almost inevitably seeking other, more satisfying relationships. This is the reason adultery is named — to suggest the advice from Text 4 *b* be applied to divorce. Simply, the plucking out of the right eye and the cutting off of the right hand signify the rejected desires for another marital relationship, desires apparently viewed as the reason for a divorce. Thus, the desire for a marital change must be abandoned, regardless of the pain of such an excision of human cravings.

It becomes clear that in both sections *b* and *c*, the seeking of satisfaction, the urge for self-expansion and self-assertion, is the point under discussion. A divorce is a clear example of the seeking of a new environment usually based on the assumption that it will provide greater security and scope for more self-assertion through a more pleasurable relationship. Thus, the invariant in Texts 4 *a* and *b* is also apparent in Text 4 *c*: the condemnation of self-assertion provoked by basic anxiety of death.

Text 4 *e* (Other cheek, 5: 38 – 42) shifts from the theme of self-expansion to its complement — self-contraction. The quotation from the Old Testament establishes the basic principle of human justice, of a balance in human retaliation that serves safety and security: "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" (5: 38). Christ's comments eliminate human justice as the central value together with the safety and security of a human being: "But I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil" (5: 39). While in sections *a, b,* and *c* the postulated principle of the quotation from the Old Testament was deepened so that it began to function on the new plane of human existence, in Text 4 *e* (5: 38 – 42) the pattern of section *d* (Oaths) is followed, whereby the entire postulated principle is abolished and a new one, infinitely more advanced and radical, is established. In the case of Text 4 *e* justice is replaced by injustice and security by total insecurity, both freely self-imposed.

Self-expansion, condemned in Texts 4 *a, b, c,* and *d,* is now replaced by the reverse in section *e*: self-contraction, illustrated by three, mutu-

ally complementary examples. The first one, "But if any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also" (5: 39), demonstrates self-contraction as physical insecurity and dishonor: a stroke on the right cheek is both painful and highly insulting. The second example, "and if any one would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well" (5: 40), introduces the principle of self-contraction in terms of property, illustrated by the sacrifice of objects of basic necessity, a coat and cloak — in other words, voluntary poverty. The third example, "and if any one forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles" (5: 41), projects the principle of self-contraction into the realm of time, strength, and energy by the example of the acceptance of imposed, and probably unrewarded, work. Thus, physical and social safety, economic security, and security in terms of time and energy or freedom of action, representing three basic, practical aspects of existence, are treated in section *e* in regard to self-contraction.

An essential idiosyncrasy of Text 4 *e* is Christ's elliptical formulations of the prescribed reactions to an assault. One step, the simple acceptance of the evil act, such as the slap on the cheek, the loss of property or time and energy, is omitted in the discourse, and the next level of self-contraction is introduced, namely, turning the other cheek, sacrificing more property, and working more than actually demanded. The omitted step in the description of the new mode of action is equivalent to that introduced in sections *a*, *b*, and *c* in regard to the Old Testament maxims. There only one step of the progression was treated: from murder to anger, from adultery to lust, from a letter of divorce to no divorce. In Text 4 *e*, however, one step is only connoted and could be reproduced in a sequence starting with a slap on the cheek leading to acceptance without resistance and from there even further — turning the other cheek; from being sued for a coat to giving it up, and then relinquishing a cloak too; from being ordered to walk one mile, accepting it, and, even more, adding an extra mile voluntarily. The elliptical formulation contributes considerable dynamism to the discourse by the concentration of a long development in a concise statement reaching instantly from one extreme to the other. Furthermore, the elliptical sections are considerably more radical than the preceding sections *a*, *b*, and *c*. In the summary of section *e* (5: 42), in the formula of giving to anyone who asks, the elliptical structure is no longer necessary. Those who ask will take as much as they can anyway,

as soon as they notice that there is no resistance or refusal, simply because there is always greater need than offer as far as charity goes.

The principle of self-contraction is obvious in the last section *f* (5: 43 – 48) as well. The quotation, "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor,'" reflects only partly the Old Testament scripture; the second part of it, "and hate your enemy" (5: 43), probably comes from the oral tradition. Nevertheless, this maxim serves as a postulate for a reverse code of behavior. The transition from the initial to the final maxim is again elliptical: the intermediate stage between hatred and love is omitted. This state could be indifference, some kind of tolerance, and so on. The relationship with enemies, however, according to KJV., pictures devoted love that rarely exists even between the closest friends or family members: "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (5: 44). The elliptical phrasing of section *f* injects into the text exceptional dynamism, which, combined with the extreme examples of love for enemies, makes an impression, not of a prescriptive discourse, but rather of a model of the transfigured state of the human being.

The section *f*, perhaps the most complex in Text 4, consists of five clearly distinguishable segments. The first (5: 43) contains the maxim from the Old Testament tradition:

> You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy."

The second (5: 44) contains the opposite – Christ's maxim:

> But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

The third (5: 45) explains by reference to God, Christ's maxim in the preceding verse:

> so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

The fourth (5: 46, 47) explains by comparing Christ's maxim (5: 44) with the moral code of the Gentiles and the tax collectors:

> For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?

The fifth (5: 48), returning to the relationship to God, parallels the third but in the broadest possible formulation, so that this verse can be viewed as the conclusion to Text 4 and even the entire fifth chapter of Matthew:

> "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

The interrelation of the individual segments is more complex. Besides interpreting Christ's maxim in the second segment (5: 44):

> "But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,"

the following segments interact among themselves. To see their interaction, we must examine two images in the text — the attributes of God in the third segment (5: 45):

> so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust

and the types of sinners introduced in the fourth segment (5: 46, 47):

> For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?

It is clearly the life-giving aspect of God's work in the world that is stressed in this text, for the light of the sun combined with the rain sent by God "on the evil and on the good" is the fundamental condition for vegetation and life in general, providing sustenance to human beings. This particular aspect of the divine work becomes especially significant when placed in the context of the following two verses of segment 4 (5: 46, 47) with the reference to the tax collectors and the Gentiles. In a country occupied by foreign forces, as was Palestine at that time, the occupant is regarded as an enemy. The tax collectors and publicans, however, were especially despised, for in the Roman Empire the fiscal system was such that its agents acted like predators living on and profiting from defenseless people and the economy of a conquered nation. In addition, they were sometimes Jews, that is, traitors to their nation, profiting from it under foreign protection. Thus, the reference to the tax collectors is much more effective than would be one to any other evil person, but, most importantly, it has a specific coloring, namely, the predatory expropriation of national wealth, or, in the final account, human sustenance. Therefore, segments

3 (5:45) and 4 (5:46, 47) constitute a tight system with two interacting forces — the life-supporting and life-giving, on the one hand, and the life-destroying and death-inflicting, on the other.

From this unity of segments 3 and 4 the neighboring segments, 2 (5:44):

> But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you

and 5 (5:48):

> You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect

acquire additional significance. The concluding, fifth segment has a more specific meaning, for the word "perfect" can be regarded as equivalent to the life-giving attribute of God introduced in segment 3 (5:45) and contrasting to the predatory nature of the tax collectors or Gentiles in segment 4 (5:46, 47). On the other hand, in the preceding second segment, "But I say to you, Love your enemies ..." (5:44), the most objectionable maxim in the context of temporal existence, though sounding like a totally arbitrary demand, becomes understandable after Text 4*f* is examined in its entirety, for this principle alone distinguishes a person from the life-taking predators and leads to alliance with the life-giving God. In this context the seeming arbitrariness of Christ's demand is overcome by the remarkable logic of His explanation, communicated by the structure of His discourse.

The meaning of Christ's maxim is conditioned by the structure of Text 4*f* in its entirety and also in the more specific rendering of the concept of love, which appears for the first time in this section and serves as the central one:

> But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you (5:44, KJV).

The following three verbs — to bless, to do good, and to pray for — benefiting those who threaten another's existence serve as illustrations of the first verb — to love. The illustrations suffice to demonstrate that the verb *to love* here does not refer at all to those emotions usually expressed by it in contemporary language. In Christ's maxim the semantics of the verb *to love* is quite different and may not include any passion, admiration, or desire; love simply and most profoundly signifies the wish of life for another.

The semantics of love, as presented above, is further sustained by segment 3 (5:45), which stresses the life-giving faculty of God, as well as His indiscriminate application of it:

> so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

The indiscriminate love in Christ's maxim parallels God's love: both are life-wishing and life-giving. On the other hand, the contrast with the predatory destructiveness of the tax collectors functions in this respect as well: they are opposed to Christ's maxim and to God's indiscriminate life-giving acts by their discriminating friendship or love, since they offer it only in return to those who give them the same.

The structure of the text leads the reader to believe that Christ preached indiscriminate love for life in anyone anywhere, and by inference indiscriminate resentment of destruction and death inflicted on anyone at any place or time. This idea actually repeats on a new plane of perception the antithesis of love and hatred in the maxim from the Old Testament tradition: "Love your neighbor and hate your enemy" (5:43) — love life, and hate death regardless of when, where, and within whom they might manifest.

Text 4*f*, however, carries further significance in respect to the invariant of Text 4, self-contraction. It is not necessary to elaborate on the concept of self-contraction on a temporal level, of course, which underlies Christ's maxim in segment 2 (5:44). Obviously, people will not advance too much in their practical affairs by loving their enemies, by doing good to those who hate them, and by blessing those who curse them. Such people will be found rather soon in the lowest social stratum with those referred to in the Beatitudes. The claim that love for one's enemies will turn them into friends is merely self-deception.

The structre of Text 4*f* differs, however, from that of the Beatitudes, and this difference alters the message of the text. The example of the tax collectors and Gentiles stresses their discriminate love and friendship, which are offered only in exchange for the same, and indicates that self-assertion and self-expansion generated by anxiety of death underly this example, for the only principle of their behavior is practical self-interest. The exchange of love for love is one of the mechanisms for organizing self-protecting groups and families. Thus, we may perceive a

negative sequence: self-assertion and self-inflation demanding discriminate love and friendship, generated by the predatory, death-inflicting inclinations of people, represented by the tax collectors and Gentiles. However, we can also see a parallel positive sequence: self-contraction generated by indiscriminate love, which mirrors the life-wishing and life-giving character of God. This antithesis conveys the message and exhortation of the entire Text 4.

Matthew 6

Text 5 (Secret righteousness) (6: 1 – 6, 16 – 18)

Text 5 a (Alms) (6: 1 – 4)

6: 1 Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them; for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

2 Thus, when you give alms, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagoges and in the streets, that they may be praised by men. Truly, I say to you, they have their reward.

3 But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

4 so that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Text 5 b (Praying) (6: 5,6)

5 And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have their reward.

6 But when you pray, go into your rroom and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (6: 7 – 15)

Text 5 c (Fasting) (6: 16 – 18)

16 And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have their reward.

17 But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,

18 that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Matthew 6, in a way similar in composition to Chapter 5, opens with the major Texts 5 and 6 (6: 1 – 18), which are developed and commented upon in the following three texts. There is, however, a particular

feature in the composition of Chapter 6, namely, that in Text 5 an entire section of exceptional importance is inserted – the Lord's Prayer (6: 9 – 13) – with two introductory (6: 7, 8) and two concluding verses (6: 14, 15). Text 5 consists of three sections, which are designated Text 5 *a* (Alms), Text 5 *b* (Praying), and Text 5 *c* (Fasting). The entire cluster of verses (6: 7 – 15) containing the Lord's Prayer (6: 9 – 13), which appears between Texts 5 *b* and 5 *c*, is designated Text 6. The reason for the separate designation of the Lord's Prayer as Text 6 is that it does not follow the formal pattern of the three sections in Text 5, each of which ends, with minor variations, with the same phrase, first introduced in verse 6: 4: "... so that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you".

Text 5 (6: 1 – 6, 16 – 18) introduces a new theme and places the following sections of the chapter into a new cultural setting. The universality of the characteristics associated with bliss and the kingdom of heaven in the Beatitudes indicates their extratemporal and extracultural context. In the further sections of Chapter 5, Texts 3 and 4, and the ninth beatitude, there are references to the specific cultural and religious background of the audience, but most of them point to the past either in terms of history or legal maxims in the Old Testament Scripture and oral tradition. Chapter 6, however, refers mostly to the present, and, therefore, it might appear that the cultural and religious scope of the teaching narrows.

In Chapter 6 the Sermon on the Mount is directed to a context of a society that has accepted, practices, and respects a certain religious norm. This generally accepted norm has a double function: it relates people to God, but at the same time it also establishes a social norm, the adherence to which guarantees a person's reputation and respect by society; in other words, this religious norm provides the adherent with additional safety and security. In a society with definite religious standards, adhering to them could be partially or even exclusively self-serving. Thus, Text 5 mentions "hypocrites."

Three items of piety in Text 5 selected from the multitude of laws and regulations strictly followed by the society at that time point to this major theme. The selection obviously duplicates the examples in Text 4 *e* (Other cheek) illustrating rejection of one's physical security (5: 39), the safety of one's property (5: 40), and control over one's time and energy or freedom of action (5: 41). In a different order but also

representing the same threefold model of one's security, the forms of righteousness are listed in Text 5: first, the alms-giving (6: 2 – 4), which contracts one's property, then the praying (6: 5, 6), which limits one's time and energy available for practical needs and, finally, the fasting (6: 16 – 18), which limits one's physical self-assertion demonstrated in enjoying food.

For the sake of clarity, it might be useful to see the two parallel texts next to each other:

Chart 9. The Interrelation of Texts 5 and 4 e

	Text 5	Text 4 e
Property		
5 a:	But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be in secret (6: 3, 4).	... and if any one would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well (5: 40).
Time		
5 b:	But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret (6: 6).	... and if any one forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles (5: 41).
Body		
5 c:	But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret (6: 17, 18).	But if any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also (5: 39).

The similarity between Texts 4 e and 5 emphasizes their difference. While in Text 4 e the insecurity is inflicted by an evil person acting outside of the religious norm, in Text 5 adherence to the religious standards themselves breeds insecurity. This parallel juxtaposition of the examples in Text 4 e with those in Text 5 clarifies the examples in the latter text. The elementary situations in Text 4 e – namely, security

of property, physical wellbeing, and freedom of action — assist in isolating the characteristics of religious piety focused upon in Text 5. The three righteous acts in Text 5 represent the voluntary renunciation of at least some self-defense mechanisms within a religious norm, while in Text 4 e the same renunciation is discussed within elementary, universal situations.

Texts 4 e and 5 both deal with resistance to the threat to security. Text 4 e connotes that the first reaction would be self-protection — defense against physical assault or legal aggression and escape from or resistance to enforced labor. In Text 5 two defensive options are possible: first, violation of the religious norm, that is, refusal to give alms, pray, and fast, which would in the given cultural context arouse public condemnation; and secondly, the more profitable alternative — flaunted righteousness — which turns self-contraction in terms of alms-giving, praying, and fasting into self-asserting and security-acquiring acts because of the public approval they engender. Thus, the parallel structure of these two texts indicates that the search for security, first rendered in Text 4 e by the idea of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" is equated in the religious context of Text 5 with ostentatious righteousness. The invariant remains the human urge for security under the pressure of anxiety of death, and self-emancipation from the anxiety of it, from the rules of self-defense and the struggle for survival. Therefore, Christ's maxim in Text 4 e, "But I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil" (5: 39), is equivalent to the good deeds performed inconspicuously within the established religious norms discussed in Text 5. This structure makes it obvious that flaunted acts of righteousness are not religious acts at all, since they still belong to the realm of self-assertion under the pressure of human mortality.

The message communicated by the structural features of the two interrelated texts (4 e and 5) sheds light on an important component in Text 5, reiterated three times and first introduced in section 5 a, which discourages the audience from flaunting righteousness, since such exposure within a religious community is rewarded: "Truly, I say to you, they have their reward" (6: 2). However, when the righteous act is concealed and, therefore, not rewarded by society, the reward is given by God: ". . . so that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (6: 4). This maxim repeated three times, when taken out of its structural relationship, may suggest some

kind of grotesque image of God as an accountant who keeps careful track of who profits from good deeds and allows each person to profit not more than once from each righteous act. Attributing such calculation to God is a perfect example of anthropomorphism. The interaction of Texts 5 and 4 e indicates, however, that seeking a reward, that is, security, in the form of public approval for good deeds on earth turns them into mundane acts of self-assertion, nullifies their religious essence, and in such case there remains nothing that could be rewarded by God in heaven. This latter point is clearly stressed at the very beginning of Text 5: "Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them ..." (6: 1). The text is clearly focusing on intended self-exposure with the practical benefits that derive from it. The text, therefore, does not advocate secrecy of righteous acts for its own sake, although this is also important, but rather the plane of existence which belongs to the realm of human immortality, that is, to the kingdom of heaven. Acts generating security, no matter how righteous they may appear, are not righteous to God, "... for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven" (6: 1).

The structural interrelations described above turn secrecy from an incomprehensible and seemingly arbitrary demand into an organic and indispensible part of the Sermon on the Mount with its emphasis on renunciation of the anxiety of death. Furthermore, the utterance, "But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be in secrect; ..." (6: 3, 4), adds to the external the internal secrecy of a righteous person.

The references to individual parts of the human body signify internal disunity and inner conflict. They appeared already in Text 4 b (Adultery), which rendered the sexual appetites as the temptations of the right hand and the right eye of a person. In Text 5 a the internal conflict is generated by a person's inclination to observe his or her own good deeds. This inevitably entails self-approval, which amounts to self-reward. The so-called "feeling good about oneself," self-satisfaction, or smugness, is another form of self-affirmation, since it implies a feeling of superiority. The broadening of the concept of secrecy in regard to good deeds and especially its inclusion in the internal realm of human existence transform this notion into one of selflessness, a concept which stresses the lack of self-preoccupation, with social standing, and, consequently, with one's security. The secrecy concerning

one's good deeds becomes only a symptom, or a sign, of the invariant in the three examples of Text 5, namely, the selflessness of the righteous person who does not seek any approval in this world, not even self-approval, and does good deeds exclusively for their own sake.

The concept of secrecy signifying selflessness brings the reader to further observations. First, secretiveness about good deeds is exceptional, for ordinarily it is adopted to hide acts that depart from the existing moral or legal standards. Normally secretiveness serves one's security, while the concealment of righteousness undermines self-protection or self-defense in two ways: by avoiding any external or internal approval and by exposing the person to open condemnation by the community unaware of his or her good deeds. Internal secretiveness also generates self-dissatisfaction stemming from a lack of awareness of one's good deeds. Thus, the system isolates the righteousness of a person from the demands of the ego for some self-esteem, self-respect, and popularity in the community. The secretiveness *per se* in Text 5 contrasts absolutely with the security-providing secretiveness in the temporal world.

The second observation concerns the interrelation between the notion of secretiveness in Text 5 and the last verse of Text 2 (Salt and light): "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (5:16). On the surface there is a glaring contradiction in the interaction of these two texts. In Text 2 the shining light seemingly excludes any possibility of secrecy. However, this light is equated in the following phrase with good works: "... so shine before men, that they may see your good works" (5:16), while they refer to the Beatitudes, as we have seen, and therefore, to emancipation from the anxiety of death. The secret fulfillment of the religious standards mentioned in Text 5 points to the same emancipation. In this interaction between Texts 2 and 5 the importance of the secrecy of the good deeds, as well as their true nature, that is, selflessness and freedom from the anxiety of death, becomes clearer. Without secrecy the alleged good works would lose their connection with immortality, with the kingdom of heaven, and therefore would not "shine before men."

On a more practical level we can clearly see that the secrecy, at least in the case of alms-giving, is limited. No matter how secretively it is done, the receiver of the alms often witnesses this act. In the case

of fasting and prayer, which are acts of spiritual self-perfection, the results, if not the acts themselves, must eventually become apparent to the community. Thus, it is not the withholding of the information itself that is the essence of Text 5 but rather the indifference to approval whether external or internal.

The insertion of Text 6 (Lord's Prayer) between Texts 5 *b* and 5 *c* appears purposeful. This insertion is actually an elaborate comment on the selflessness which the secrecy of the good deed reflects. It seems that the location of Text 6 within Text 5 was necessary to establish this elaboration and that the sequence of the individual sections of Text 5 was adjusted accordingly. The exact repetition in Text 5 of the number of examples in Text 4 *e* and their relation to the same aspects of security suggests that the order of these examples in both texts should be the same, that is, that the examples referring to physical insecurity would appear at parallel places in the two texts, and the same would apply to the examples of the insecurity of private property and of time and energy. The coherent sequence of these two texts is partially preserved and is presented below with the arrow showing the single shift:

Chart 10. The Interrelation of Sequences in Texts 4 *e* and 5

Text 4 *e* Verses	Common Variants	Text 5 Verses	Texts	Insertion
39	physical wellbeing			
40	property	2 – 4	5 *a* alms	
41	freedom of action	5, 6	5 *b* prayer	
				6: 7 – 15 (Lord's Prayer)
		16 – 18	5 *c* fasting	

The sequence of individual entries in both texts would be the same if the first entry in Text 4 *e* had not been shifted to the end in Text 5. This shift, however, was probably necessary in order to insert Text 6 after the discussion of prayer (5 *b*) and to frame Text 6 with sections of Text 5. This incorporation has an important impact on the entire Text 6, since by its location it also participates in the development of the category of selflessness, the invariant of Text 5.

Text 6 (Lord's Prayer) (6:7 − 15)

Introduction (6: 7 − 9a)

6:7 And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words.

8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before your ask him.

9 Pray then like this:

Lord's Prayer (6: 9b − 13)

"Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.

10 Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread,

12 And forgive us our debts,
As we also have forgiven our debtors;

13 And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil."

Explanation (6: 14,15)

14 For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you;

15 but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Text 6 (6:7 − 15) constitutes a symmetrically structured section with the central part, the Lord's Prayer (6:9 − 13), framed by two introductory (6:7, 8) and two explanatory verses (6:14, 15) at the end. The incorporation of Text 6 into Text 5 creates, in regard to the Lord's Prayer, a composition with a double frame, or a text within a text within a text.

The Lord's Prayer, one of the most closely studied sections in the New Testament, is usually regarded as a sequence of six petitions: the first three dealing with God's role in the world and the second three concerning human life and needs. Although this reading may be the most immediately apparent one, one may suggest that there are actually seven petitions, and that the Lord's Prayer must be examined within Text 6 in order to be better understood in the context of the Sermon on the Mount.

In the framework of Text 5 with its invariant of self-contraction in the context of a commonly accepted norm of piety, Text 6 focuses on the same invariant extended to one's relationship to God. Of the three illustrations of piety — alms-giving, prayer and fasting — in Text 5 one is exceptional. Unlike the other two, prayer can be regarded as an act of dual nature — as an act of piety and as a communication with God. The latter aspect of prayer is not as clearly evident in the alms-giving and fasting, and thus prayer receives additional attention in Text 6. The two introductory verses of Text 6 (6: 7, 8) point exactly to this concern of the Speaker with prayer. He .warns against self-expansion in relation to God, first through wordiness (6: 7), or the formal aspect of prayer, and then against the same error, but this time caused by self-preoccupation in the content of the prayer (6: 8). The latter is clearly conveyed by the explanation in the same verse: "... for your Father knows what you need before you ask him." Thus, the following Lord's Prayer is brief, and its first three petitions, most explicitly the third, illustrate the lack of self-preoccupation: "Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven" (6: 10). The will of the Father who is in heaven, when realized on the earth, encompasses all possible petitions, since human needs are obvious to Him and, therefore need not be communicated in detail.

The two concluding verses in Text 6 (6: 14, 15) differ radically from the introductory ones and might seem to be arbitrarily included, for they explain only one of seven petitions in the Lord's Prayer ("And forgive us our debts, As we also have forgiven our debtors;" 6: 12). There is, however, a certain symmetry to the two framing sections, for the first one relates to the petition in the first half of the Lord's Prayer, "Thy will be done ..." (6: 10), while the last one deals with the petition in the second half. The significance of the concluding verses appears far greater, however, as soon as we turn to their structure.

Both concluding verses consist of two clauses, indicating an act, first positive — "for if you forgive men their trespasses ..." (6: 14) — and then negative — "but if you do not forgive men their trespasses ..." (6: 15) — followed by God's acts, again the first positive — "... your heavenly Father also will forgive you" (6: 14) — and then negative — "... neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (6: 15). The parallelism of these explanatory verses links them with other explanatory verses in the preceding Texts 5 *a* and *b*: "so that your alms

may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you."
This similarity unifies Texts 5 and 6, and also emphasizes the contrast
between the parallel sections in these texts, for the explanation follow-
ing the Lord's Prayer at first seems to be far less necessary than the
explanations offered in Text 5. Furthermore, the parallel structure in
Text 6 suggests the structure of the Beatitudes, particularly in those
that indicate a direct relationship between their left and right parts as
does the fifth: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy"
(5: 7). As a matter of fact, the fifth beatitude is almost identical to the
fifth petition in the Lord's Prayer, "And forgive us our debts, As we
also have forgiven our debtors" (6: 12). Thus, the explanation of the
fifth petition might serve an extra purpose; namely, it might point to
a certain link between Text 6 and the Beatitudes.

It is the order of the individual entries in both texts, as well as
their general structure, that unites the Beatitudes with Text 6. The
marked structure of the Beatitudes, divided paradigmatically into two
sequences, left and right, the state of bliss and the heavenly kingdom,
is paralleled in the Lord's Prayer by the division according to the same
categories but along a vertical rather than a horizontal axis. The first
three petitions in the Lord's Prayer pertain to the kingdom of heaven,
and the last four to human temporal existence. The overall correspon-
dence between the Beatitudes and Text 6 could be ascribed to the
general nature of any religious text, which elaborates on the inter-
relationship between two, transcendental and temporal, worlds. The
homogeneity of the Beatitudes and Text 6, however, rests on close
correspondences between individual entries. These become apparent as
soon as we compare these texts in an attempt to find in Text 6
corresponding entries for individual human characteristics in the left
part of the Beatitudes. Such an attempt, although lacking complete
precision in each individual case, for the characteristics in the Beatitudes
overlap and complement each other, nevertheless, offers a sufficiently
convincing overall picture of the reflection of one text in the other.

The two introductory verses in Text 6 (6: 7, 8) may reflect the likely
attitude of those who are "poor in spirit" toward God and toward
their practical needs in the first beatitude (5: 3). In Text 6, verses 7
and 8 comment explicitly on this beatitude with its external and
internal aspects, one related to practical needs expressed in "... for
your Father knows what you need before you ask him" (6: 8), and the

other to the internal relationship to God rendered in "And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words" (6:7). It is the arrogance and demands made upon God that are renounced in the first two introductory verses of Text 6, as well as in the first beatitude.

The first and second petitions in the Lord's Prayer express the longing for the perfection of humanity, for whose vain existence the prayer mourns as do those in the second beatitude (5:4). Such persons might be expected to state at the beginning of the prayer: "Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come ..." (6:9, 10). We can, of course, view these petitions, as well as the second beatitude, in an eschatological light, but the range of eschatological expectations is enormous, running from individual to universal dimensions; thus the eschatological tenor of these texts does not exclude their relevance for the individual within his or her life span.

The third beatitude — "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (5:5) — refers to those who do not seek their rights, and in the Lord's Prayer this attribute is extended to their renunciation of their own right to decide, or of their own will, and their reliance on the will of God: "Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven" (6:10). While the meek "shall inherit the earth" when the will of God is implemented on earth as it is in heaven, in the Lord's Prayer the meek presumably pray for exactly this state in human society, and their petition is lexically linked to the third beatitude by the noun "earth."

In the fourth beatitude those who hunger and thirst for righteousness will be satisfied, while in the fourth petition of the Lord's Prayer, they pray for their "daily bread," which can signify physical as well as spiritual sustenance, and probably both. The interaction between the two sections is emphasized lexically, for in one "bread" appears and in the other, "hunger."

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (5:7), the fifth beatitude states as if reflecting the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer: "And forgive us our debts, As we also have forgiven our debtors" (6:12). The merciful forgiveness by God appears in the right part of the beatitude and the first part of the petition, while human mercy and forgiveness appear in the left and second parts respectively and, therefore, establish a mirror reflection of each other. The same relationship between human actions and those of God is further reiter-

ated in the explanatory verses at the end of Text 6 (6: 14, 15) about God's forgiveness of those who forgive others.

As was shown in this study, the sixth (Pure in heart) and seventh (Peacemakers) beatitudes (5: 8, 9) differ from all the preceding ones in their right parts, which link them by referring directly to God. In the Lord's Prayer the last two petitions are also distinguished from the preceding five. The distinction is achieved both by the form — the joining of the petitions into one sentence — and by the content, since these two petitions are among those that refer to eschatological aspirations and ask God to remove the evil from human temporal existence. The first of these petitions, "And lead us not into temptation" (6: 13), suggests the sixth beatitude: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (5: 8). It is perhaps the naiveté of the pure in heart, their defenselessness in facing the evil of the world, their lack of experience in this sense that would make this petition most precious to them.

The last petition, syntactically united with the preceding one, "But deliver us from evil" (6: 13), refers, of course, to the pure in heart but also and perhaps more directly to the peacemakers in the seventh beatitude: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God" (5: 9). The peacemaking in the Beatitudes signifies the preference for peace over one's advantage. This preference can be demonstrated under assault, during an attempt to deprive a person of security. Peacemaking is a response, in other words, to an evil provocation; there must be an invitation for a struggle and confrontation in order to bring forth the peacemaker. In this light the last petition in the Lord's Prayer appears most appropriate for those who prefer to suffer and to be mistreated rather than to abandon peace and to struggle. They do not want to be provoked by evil.

As already shown, the last two beatitudes constitute the second part of the entire Text 1, the eighth beatitude acting as an introduction to the ninth reiterating within Christ's self-revelation the six central beatitudes (see Chart 6). Though this reiteration is not directly reflected in the Lord's Prayer, it is reflected in the last two verses of Text 6. One important characteristic of the part of the Beatitudes revelatory of Christ is that the blessed appear as recipients of some attitude or action. These two beatitudes, the eighth and the ninth, refer to those who are persecuted, reviled, and slandered for righteousness and for

Christ's sake, thus to the victims of retaliatory violence. This overt reference to violence and evil separates these two beatitudes from the preceding ones, since the mistreatment of those referred to there can only be inferred while the last two beatitudes deal directly with evil acts against those who are righteous in Christ's name.

The fact that the last two beatitudes concern the persecution of the blessed raises the question of their reaction to this persecution. In accordance with the preceding seven beatitudes the reaction can only be to forgive those who sin against them and not to retaliate. In Text 6 this aspect of the second part of the Beatitudes· is reflected in the two concluding verses (6: 14, 15), for they comment exactly on the nature of forgiving, are seemingly loosely attached to the entire text of the Lord's Prayer, and are markedly located at the very end of Text 6.

The juxtaposition of these two texts appears on Chart 11 (p. 116).

From Chart 11 we can see that the six central beatitudes correspond to the Lord's Prayer, while the first beatitude corresponds to the introductory verses in Text 6 and the second part of the Beatitudes to the two concluding verses.

There is to a certain degree artificiality in this attempt to trace particular correspondences between individual entries in the Beatitudes and Text 6, or specifically the Lord's Prayer. The very close correspondence between two seemingly disconnected texts, however, indicates that as wholes they reflect each other. Furthermore, as the Beatitudes are a model of human existence on both the empirical and transcendental planes, so the Lord's Prayer, or Text 6, is a model of human implementation of the Beatitudes in the context of communication with God. Thus, the Beatitudes contain the Lord's Prayer and, vice versa, the Lord's Prayer contains the Beatitudes. Each is the model of the other.

Different settings and viewpoints, however, distinguish these two texts. As in the Beatitudes and Christ's revelation previously condensed into the formula, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (4: 17), the Lord's Prayer addresses God with the kingdom of heaven being the only point. In the Beatitudes, however, the kingdom of heaven is presented from a viewpoint remote from humanity, one that permits observation of temporal existence with its subordination to the anxiety of death, whereas in the Lord's Prayer the discourse arises from within

Chart 11. A Comparison of Text 6 with the Beatitudes

Text 6	Text 1: The Beatitudes
Introductory verses	*The first beatitude*
And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. (6:7, 8)	Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (5:3)
The Lord's Prayer	*The six central beatitudes*
Pray then like this: "Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, (6:9, 10)	Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. (5:4)
Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. (6:10)	Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. (5:5)
Give us this day our daily bread, (6:11)	Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. (5:6)
And forgive us our debts, As we also have forgiven our debtors; (6:12)	Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. (5:7)
And lead us not into temptation, (6:13)	Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. (5:8)
But deliver us from evil." (6:13)	Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. (5:9)
Concluding verses	*The second part of the Beatitudes*
For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (6:14, 15)	Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (5:10)
	Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you. (5:11, 12)

the realm of death and is directed outward to the deathless kingdom of heaven, to God.

The interplay of the contrasting viewpoints of these two texts is further complicated by the fact that the Lord's Prayer is incorporated into Christ's discourse; therefore, it is both His formula of a communication with God and at the same time a part of His revelation of the accessibility of the kingdom of heaven. The Beatitudes and Text 6 each represent three states of human existence − the rule of death, rebellion against this rule, and total liberation from this rule. The prayer is given to those who are cognizant of Christ's revelation and, therefore, can incorporate it, as well as the Beatitudes, into their existence, that is, can rebel against the rule of death. The prayer petitions God in the first-person plural on behalf of all humanity or even all living creatures on earth still in "the region and shadow of death" (4:16), while the entire Text 6, by reflecting the structure and the content of the Beatitudes, represents also the kingdom of heaven itself. Christ's stance, so emphatically communicated in the Beatitudes by the location and the structure of the last two beatitudes, in regard to Text 6 is conveyed by the fact that it is in His discourse that the prayer-model appears − it is both His and humanity's prayer. Furthermore, the two concluding verses in Text 6 (6:14, 15) elaborate on Christ's stance and significance and contribute a new dimension to the eighth and ninth beatitudes by adding forgiveness of offenders.

In this context the stance of the Speaker within His discourse is most illuminating. An examination of the last two beatitudes showed that the Speaker at that point was identified with the emancipation from the anxiety of death and the principle of the kingdom of heaven. The functional plurality of the Speaker, or Christ, as revealed in the Beatitudes, is also evident in Text 6, especially in the Lord's Prayer. The homogeneity of Text 6 and the Beatitudes links the former via the latter with the kingdom of heaven. In the second part of the Beatitudes the kingdom of heaven was equated to the Speaker, who within Text 6 offers the prayer, a model of the kingdom of heaven, and, therefore, of the Speaker Himself. Thus, it transpires from the structures of these texts and their interaction that Christ is not only the Speaker, but also the medium, as well as the very content of this communication. The multiple functions of the Speaker in this instance are obvious, for they include virtually all the aspects of a communicative act: He is the

addresser, as well as the addressee because His communication is fully accessible to those who implement His principle of the kingdom of heaven, that is, Himself. He is also the context of His communication, its code and its message. This aspect of 'Text 6, revelatory of Christ, is the most important similarity between it and the Beatitudes.

The interaction between the Beatitudes and Text 6 points also to the universality of the Lord's Prayer. While the left side of the Beatitudes represents a universal model of humanity unlimited by time or space, Text 6 with the Lord's Prayer offers a universal religious model, representing the interrelation of all living creatures in the world and the world itself to its Creator. We can regard Text 6 and the Lord's Prayer as Christ's reiteration of the Beatitudes, but this time in the context of a religious society, and in this respect Text 6 parallels Text 5, into which, as we have seen, it is intentionally incorporated.

The sequence of the individual entries appears essential for tracing the interrelations of various texts within the Sermon on the Mount. It has already been shown that the beatitude 9 reflects six central beatitudes and that Text 5 repeats the sequence of the entire Text 4e (Other cheek) with one alternation resulting from the incorporation of Text 6. Text 6 contains the same sequence of entries as the Beatitudes. The dual reflection in Texts 5 and 6 of Text 4e and the Beatitudes is revealing because these essential texts of Chapter 5 located at its extremities appear in the new cultural setting of a religiously organized society right at the beginning of Chapter 6. Thus, there is a new elaboration on the same theme but from a new perspective. The projection of the two extremities of Chapter 5 onto the introductory texts of Chapter 6 allows us to recognize and determine the most essential invariants of the entire communication.

The continuum established between Chapters 5 and 6 is achieved by the Speaker's selection of two texts from the former (the Beatitudes and Text 4e) and His projection of them onto the new context. This selection indicates the major theme continued in Chapter 6, namely, human self-contraction, for this theme, as we have seen, is most essential in both texts, the Beatitudes and Text 4e. Thus, Chapter 6, the second chapter in the Sermon on the Mount, begins with the restatement of self-contraction as an act of liberation from the despotic domination of death. This fundamental theme appears in high relief, thanks to the links between the texts of Chapters 5 and 6 which can

be observed only because of the correspondences of their individual entries, traceable by means of their invariants. Thus, the invariant in all four texts, namely, emancipation from the anxiety of death and the striving for deathless life, the kingdom of heaven, functions as the central message of the modeling system in the texts analyzed so far.

Text 7 (Treasures in heaven) (6: 19 – 21)

6: 19 Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal,
20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal.
21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Text 7 consists of three verses (6: 19 – 21) with a common subject, "treasures," placed first on the earth (6: 19) and then in heaven (6: 20), followed by a concluding verse (6: 21) explaining the principle of the saying. Text 7 functions like Text 2 (Salt and light) in Chapter 5 – as a postscript or a comment on the preceding text. Text 2 stands in direct relation to Text 1, the Beatitudes, while Text 7 must be understood in relation to Text 5 (Secret righteousness).

The key word in Text 7, "treasures," is often interpreted as property, probably because of a naive understanding of the moth, rust, and thieves, which make human possessions unsafe. Such an interpretation, however, cannot be accepted, for if the moth and the thieves are taken literally, then verse 6: 20, where the treasures are transferred into heaven, becomes nonsensical. It is hard to imagine that Christ was informing His audience that there is no corrosion or theft in the kingdom of heaven. Clearly the treasures in Text 7 do not signify property in the narrow sense, but rather anything that is treasured.

This reading emerges from the interaction of Text 7 with Text 5 and, as a matter of fact, with Text 6, the Lord's Prayer. As was shown, Text 5 placed the concept of the self-contraction of a person seeking liberation from the anxiety of death into the context of a society with firm religious norms. In such a context apparently religious acts may become self-serving and, therefore, irreligious when performed to acquire social approval, or self-approval, or even to extort practical benefits from God. The advantages of flaunted piety – trust, high

esteem — in turn bring complacency and material safety. The profiting from religion, faith, and piety is the point in Text 5. The same or very similar message may be found in Text 6, for in the Lord's Prayer there is virtually no petition that could enhance anyone's material or psychological state. Text 7 refers to the same type of treasures that provide a sense of security and, therefore, fortify a person's position in the struggle for survival. These treasures are vulnerable to moth, rust, and thieves and thus do not provide the security aspired to, namely, that of deathless life. Such security may be found only in the kingdom of heaven. It is there that the major treasure, emancipation from the tyranny of death, may be secured according to verse 6:20:

> but lay up for yourself treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal.

The treasures laid up in heaven are the central point in Text 7. On the surface there is a contradiction in terms, for the kingdom of heaven, as presented in the Sermon on the Mount, is the treasure in itself, and any additional possessions or treasures are totally unthinkable. To read this phrase as a reference to Christian virtues, such as love, faith, and others, would be a radical misconstruction of the basic concepts in the Sermon on the Mount, since these virtues merely enable a person to enter the kingdom of heaven, to become part of it, to blend with it. Thus, the kingdom of heaven is the treasure itself and cannot be regarded as a safe-deposit box for other treasures.

The entire set of images in Text 7 falls apart unless we read it in the context of all the preceding texts of the Sermon on the Mount. Most important in this respect is the interrelation of Texts 7 and 2. The salty salt of the latter is reflected in Text 7 by the treasures in heaven, and the unsalty salt by the treasures on earth. In both cases a certain value either does or does not function according to its designation. In Text 2 the saltiness of salt signifies, as was shown, the acceptance and implementation of the invariant of the Beatitudes — fearlessness toward death expressed in self-contraction for Christ's sake, who in this context represents the principle of eternal life in the kingdom of heaven. Text 7 reiterates the point of Text 2 only in regard to one's aspirations. In both cases the form of presentation is the same. A certain value functioning rightly is contrasted to the same value functioning wrongly or not functioning at all. The value in question

referred to in Text 7 is what is treasured, which, according to the Beatitudes and Texts 5 and 6, is security against death. This security when it rests on a person's sense of superiority in temporal existence is fallacious, whereas security against a person's annihilation can be found in the emancipation from the anxiety of death. As revealed in the Beatitudes, the kingdom of heaven begins with the repudiation of the anxiety of death, and this repudiation brings bliss — the treasures of Text 7. Thus, the treasures stored in heaven are immortality attained by self-emancipation from the anxiety of death as indicated by the left part of the Beatitudes.

The last explanatory verse testifies to the same reading: "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (6: 21). Those seeking immortality, the most precious treasure, will certainly devote their hearts and thoughts to the heavenly kingdom where immortality can be secured. If they aspire to immortality in the temporal world, then their hearts lie there, and they remain immune to the revelation of the Beatitudes or indifferent to the message of Texts 5 and 6. In the context of the Sermon on the Mount such inaccessibility of the kingdom of heaven is tragic. The aspiration to immortality in the kingdom of heaven, however, opens their hearts, that is, their perceptiveness to the revelation of the Beatitudes, and can allow them to become "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" according to Text 2.

Commenting on Text 5, Text 7 shows that those who place treasured hopes for immortality in the kingdom of heaven will not act righteously to achieve security, or pseudo-immortality in the temporal world, but will rather do good works for their direct and only purpose — to attain death-free life in the kingdom of heaven.

The closing explanatory verse combining participation and knowledge adds additional meaning to Text 7: "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (6: 21). It is the act of putting treasures into the kingdom of heaven that generates knowledge and love for this kingdom. On the other hand, it is necessary to know and love the kingdom in order to put treasures there. So knowledge, love, and participation are present simultaneously, supporting each other, and no one knows which comes first and which follows. Mutually inclusive, they cannot be separated from each other in time, just as the state of bliss and the kingdom of heaven cannot be separated from each other in the Beatitudes.

Text 8 (Light of the body) (6: 22,23)

> 6: 22 The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light;
> 23 but if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

Text 8 (6: 22, 23) could be regarded as the second part of Text 7, for their structures, although independent, are almost identical and communicate fully only in relationship to each other. Text 8 consists of four sentences: the two central ones dealing with the major subject, the human eye, which first is rendered as functioning properly and then inadequately. In the first and fourth, or last, sentences the subject, light, equated with the eye, is rendered first positively but at the end of the text is equated with its antipode − darkness.

The parallelism of Text 8 with the second half of Text 2 is clearly indicated by two similar images: a lamp put under a bushel (5: 15) and an eye that does not light the body, leaving it in darkness (6: 23). Since Text 7 was shown to contain a structure parallel to that of Text 2 with the saltless salt rendered as unsafe earthly treasures, we may regard Texts 7 and 8 as parallel to Text 2.

In Text 2 a one-room dwelling common in Palestine during Christ's time serves as the background of the imagery:

> Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house (5: 15).

In Text 8 the same setting must be used for interpretation. A definite hierarchy of lightness and darkness is connoted in Text 8, especially in its last, most significant but cryptic sentence: "If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!" (6: 23). A human being, like a one-room house, is presumed to be in darkness if not lit by a lamp. Thus, in Text 8, four paradigms are introduced in the first sentence, "The eye is the lamp of the body" (6: 22). They are the inner space of the human being; the illuminating agent, the lamp or the eye; the assumed darkness of the inner space; and the expected light from the lamp or the eye. In the second sentence the proper function of a sound eye is described, which results in the lighting of human inner space, the intrinsic being: "So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light." The third sentence, however, introduces the

malfunctioning agent which results in inner darkness: "but if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of darkness" (6:23). Up to this point the entire saying amounts to a banality, a statement that if the light in a room does not function, the room remains unlit, or dark. The main revelation comes in the last sentence: "If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!" (6:23). Here the paradigms of light and darkness blend together ("the light in you is darkness") as a result of the malfunctioning eye. In this imagery it appears that the lamp that does not radiate light still remains an agent radiating the antipode to light — darkness. This darkness, we may say, still illuminates the darkness of the inner space, the inner domain of a person. Thus, the initial darkness is still darker than the darkness generated by the malfunctioning lamp, or the eye. The two types of darkness and the two contrasting effects of the eye are two central, conceptual pairs in this communication.

This controversial construct reminds the reader of the saltless salt in Text 2, which is still regarded as salt after it has lost its power. In Text 8 the lamp, while not illuminating, still continues radiating, but not light. The retention of the generic identification of an agent even after its basic and only function is abolished is most significant for Texts 2 and 8 and, to a lesser degree, perhaps for Text 7 as well. The same construction, as we shall see, recurs in some other texts of the Sermon on the Mount.

The link between Texts 2 and 8 clarifies the concrete significance of the categories of light and darkness in the latter text. As we have seen, in Text 2 the light of a human being is equated to his or her good deeds which shine in the world and glorify God (5:16). As was shown, the good deeds are those connoted in the left part of the Beatitudes with the invariant, the resentment of self-assertion caused by the anxiety of death. In Text 8, however, the light supposedly shines not outwardly to the world but inwardly, inside a person, and, therefore, it refers to the good deeds treated in Texts 5 and 6, namely, righteous acts, which can be selfless and, therefore, genuinely religious, or self-serving and, therefore irreligious. Formally alms-giving, praying, and fasting, as well as all the other religious acts, remain the same even though performed with the intention of impressing the public and acquiring its approval with all the accompanying benefits. In reality, however, such evident acts still belong to the realm of death, self-

assertive activity and, therefore, serve not the eternal life in the kingdom of heaven but the antipodal kingdom of death. If the religious acts that should secure liberation from the rule of death in practice become the agents of this very rule, then how limitless must be the power of the anxiety of death: "If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!" (6:23), or how dark must the "shadow of death" (4:16) be within such a person.

An important detail in Text 8 is the equation of the human eye with the lamp, or source of light. The good deeds connoted in the left part of the Beatitudes must testify to the goodness and glory of God: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (5:16). These good works, derived from the left part of the Beatitudes, contain their invariant, the emancipation from the anxiety of death, and, therefore, serve as the testimony of God's will to free humanity from the yoke of death. Thus, like those who received Christ's revelation concerning immortality, those who see the good works also learn that the reality of this world is not as it appears, that the struggle for survival is not the exclusive way of human existence. The good works of those referred to in the left part of the Beatitudes, of those who are poor in spirit, meek, pure in heart, and persecuted, demonstrate fearlessness in regard to death and, therefore, convey real human nature – immortality and the ability to live defenselessly. Those who see it are grateful for this good news and glorify God.

Text 8 refers to the same effect of the Beatitudes, but in a negative setting. The malfunctioning human eye does not allow the light of those who are "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" (Text 2) to penetrate the inner space of a person and, therefore, does not illuminate it by the light of the Beatitudes. This malfunctioning eye, however, does let in some radiation from the outer world – namely, it brings to the inner darkness a fallacious remedy for the dread of annihilation and death. It shows human beings following the mundane self-protection in the shape of self-affirmation, complacency, and the perfection of the art of the struggle for survival. In the inner darkness of the boundless anxiety of death these remedies, fallacious and futile, offer false consolation. Therefore, they appear as light, although they do not illuminate, for they only testify to the rule of death and subdue human works to it. Hence, the hierarchy of darkness

in Text 8. In this context any activity, even such religious acts as the alms-giving, praying, and fasting referred to in Texts 5 and 6 may appear self-protecting and self-serving, for even in these acts the benefits of public approval may be sought. Thus, the close interaction of Texts 8 and 2 perceived in the context of Texts 5 and 6, offers a solution to the rather cryptic conclusion of Text 8: "If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!" (6:23).

Text 9 (God and mammon) (6:24)

> 6:24 No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

As Text 3 (Old law) serves as a second comment on the Beatitudes in Chapter 5 and also links Texts 2 (Salt and light) and 4 (But I say to you), so in Chapter 6, Text 9 (God and mammon) comments both on Texts 5 (Secret righteousness) and 6 (Lord's Prayer) and bridges Texts 8 (Light of the body) and 10 (Birds and lilies). Text 9 consists of a tightly structured verse with an introductory and concluding sentence at each extremity and two explanatory, complementary phrases in the middle.

The serving of two masters, postulated as an impossibility right in the beginning ("No one can serve two masters ...," 6:24) implies by omission that the third possibility of serving no master, or serving oneself, does not even exist for the Speaker. This omission is important, since it relates Text 9 directly to the preceding Text 8 and also indirectly to Texts 5 and 6.

The basic message of Text 9, first stated in general terms, according to which a person is placed between two masters, is specified in the last phrase: "You cannot serve God and mammon" (6:24). Thus, three ideas are communicated. First, it is necessary to serve a master; in other words, freedom is limited in this respect, for to serve no master is out of the question, and the only freedom that exists is to chose which master to serve. Secondly, it is not possible to serve more than one master, and finally, the choice is very limited, since there are only two masters to choose from: God and mammon. Thus, the entire text

slowly advances to a universal model of two extremes — on the one
side, God; on the other, a rather surprising antipode — mammon. One
of the most revealing details of this text is the closing reference to
mammon, for it alone is chosen to represent human existence which
stands in opposition to God, while such existence could have been
illustrated, according to the religious norm of a given society, by an
endless list of human vices. There is a synthetic quality to the term
mammon, which must be based on some principle.

Mammon, or wealth, money, and cupidity, may be regarded as
only one of the many captivating forces acting upon a person who can
be enslaved by excessive sensuality, love for distraction, power, fame,
and the like, although wealth is useful in all these cases. Two special
qualities of mammon, however, seem to provide it with exceptional
status: first, wealth is the most direct channel for self-assertion, the
establishment of security, the acquisition of a sense of superiority over
other mortals, and thus the presumed removal of the curse of mortality.
Secondly, mammon has a lasting power; it outlives the person who has
accumulated the riches; mammon has a life of its own. Riches, especially
considerable ones, continue their existence, pass on to heirs, to institu-
tions and, furthermore, have the ability to multiply. Thus, mammon
can be regarded as an independent force — the power of money, the
power of gold.

In Text 9 the word *mammon* receives special, elevated treatment:
in the first sentence it is implicitly equated to a master and in the
conclusion is placed next to God. Gold, or mammon, appears to be
personified, thus supporting the suggested explanation of its selection.

The selection of mammon for the designation of the factors in
human existence antipodal to God, as well as its elevation, suggests
quite definitely that both categories essential to the Sermon on the
Mount, the internal and external provinces of human existence, are
signified in Text 9. Mammon can be regarded as both personal cupidity
and historical force. Only a category of such dimensions deserves a
position vis-a-vis God in the last phrase of the text.

On the internal, or personal, level mammon represents the antithesis
to the invariant of the left part of the Beatitudes — self-contraction
generated by emancipation from the anxiety of death. Cupidity can be
understood only as the human urge for security satisfied by the amass-
ing of goods and property with their by-product — prestige in the

community. Of course, these two objectives are best realized by the accumulation of money. Money can easily be stored; it can be endlessly reinvested and, therefore, augmented and, perhaps, most importantly, it offers a sense of security that no other material commodity can offer. Gold, the universally accepted basis of monetary systems, symbolizes in the history of humanity immortality because it does not corrode; its color resembles that of the sun, the source of biological life; the round shape of a gold coin also symbolizes eternity and thus immortality. The same symbol of immortality appeared in the image of the Roman deity, the caesar, on one side of the gold coins. Money can be and probably in many cases is unconsciously viewed as a sacred object, its acquisition as a sacred activity, and its possession as a sacred state, a token, or probably much more than a mere token, of human immortality.* Such an attitude to money may explain the irrational obsession with it; it may also explain its pathological accumulation in amounts that far exceed any personal need. Thus, one aspect of serving mammon is seeking surrogate immortality by practical, though irrational, means. Mammon, fallaciously regarded as a religious concept, is appropriate in Text 9 to stand for all the elements of the temporal existence of humanity that are antipodal to God.

It does not take too much reflection, especially in the current era, to see the historical or external effects of the worship of mammon. The accumulation of wealth is not as innocent as it might seem, it is not extracted from some bottomless reservoir of commodities, but rather from limited resources. Furthermore, the greater the accumulated wealth, the greater the real or imaginary need to protect it in the minds of the wealthy. We may wonder whether the protection of wealth does not require greater expenditures and sacrifices than the wealth is worth. Such great sacrifices, actually sacrifices of human lives, could not be offered to an insignificant idol. It is the pseudo-divinity, mammon, offering surrogate immortality, who stands behind the irrationality of wealth. Thus, mammon in both its internal and external functions occupies the position of a deity, the power of which can be explained only by the hope of receiving some type of immortality in return for worship of and self-identification with it. This is the reason why in the Sermon on the Mount mammon is juxtaposed to God.

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* See Norman O. Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 272–287.

It would be reasonable to question why Text 9 is in Chapter 6, following Text 8 (Light of the body) which deals with the inability to perceive the kingdom of heaven in the present. Certainly the transition from Text 8 to Text 9 is abrupt, but it is totally sensible, for the basic concept of immortality projected onto the perception of the world in Text 8 is in Text 9 projected onto people's actions and the general orientation of human existence. Two avenues of human efforts can be traced simultaneously in these two texts: if the eye is sound, it is possible to see the good works of those who are "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" and recognize in them their awareness of their immortality, for these good works demonstrate fearlessness in regard to death. This observation prompts the glorification and service of God by joining those referred to in the left part of the Beatitudes. On the other hand, an unsound eye does not register the good deeds of those who are blessed already in the present, temporal world. All the radiation that such an eye is capable of is darkness — anxiety of death — which pervades ordinary human behavior in the struggle for survival. In this case security against death is sought in self-assertion of any kind, the greatest of which is the service to mammon, including its ultimate manifestation — the destructiveness of the human struggle for survival. Thus, what was implicit in Text 2 (the saltless salt and the lamp under the bushel) and was alluded to in Text 8 (the light of an ansound eye, which is darkness penetrating an even more profound darkness) is explicit in Text 9 — the search for surrogate immortality in the temporal world, or in this case, servitude to gold, or mammon.

To no less degree is Text 9 related to Texts 5 and 6. The three examples of boastful piety treated in Text 5 (alms-giving, praying, and fasting) are first described as only nominally serving God, but in reality, are used for practical advantage; they serve, according of Text 9, mammon. Thus, the interrelation and complementarity of Texts 5 and 9 broaden the concept of mammon and bring into its domain any self-assertive action, whether it has to do with conspicuous piety, or prevailing religious standards. Finally, in relation to the Beatitudes, mammon signifies the cannoted present state of humanity, controlled by the anxiety of death, which contrasts with the entire sequence of the left part of all the beatitudes.

Text 9 in Chapter 6, like Text 3 (Old law) in Chapter 5, serves as a transition from the first part of the chapter to its last text. The

similarity between Texts 3 and 9, however, is deeper than that. They both summarize the preceding texts in their respective chapters. While in Text 3 the summary is "For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (5:20), in Text 9 the summary is "You cannot serve God and mammon" (6:24). The parallelism between these two summaries is obvious. Both refer to two types of ethics or devotions: in Text 3 it is the ethics of the scribes and Pharisees, devoted to the security of law, versus the model of the Beatitudes; in Text 9 it is the security of the servants of mammon juxtaposed to the temporal insecurity of the servants of God. As the major point of Text 3 is clarified in the following, closing text of Chapter 5, so in Chapter 6 the central statement of Text 9 is illuminated in the following Text 10.

Text 10 (Birds and lilies) (6:25 – 34)

Text 10 a (Do not be anxious) (6:25)

6:25 Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?

Text 10 b (Look at the birds) (6:26 – 30)

26 Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

27 And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his span of life?

28 And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin;

29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith?

Text 10 c (Your Father knows) (6:31, 32)

31 Therefore do not be anxious, saying, "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" or "What shall we wear?"

32 For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.

Text 10 d (His kingdom) (6:33)

33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well.

Text 10 e (Tomorrow) (6: 34)

> 34 Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious
> for itself. Let the day's own trouble be sufficient for the day.

Text 10 (6: 25 – 34) is not as structured as most of the texts examined so far; its unification, thematic rather than formal, relies on a single theme identical to the first beatitude: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (5: 3). However, within Text 10 five sections are easily distinguishable: Text 10 *a* (Do not be anxious – 6: 25); Text 10 *b* (Look at the birds – 6: 26 – 30); Text 10 *c* (Your Father knows – 6: 31, 32); Text 10 *d* (His kingdom – 6: 33); and Text 10 *e* (Tomorrow – 6: 34).

Text 10 develops its central message in a complex way. It progresses in three mutually reflecting and complementary steps, which can easily be detected from the repetition of the phrase "do not be anxious" in Texts 10*a*, *c*, and *e*. The two remaining sections, Texts 10 *b* and *d*, are equally important, however, since Text 10 *b*, the longest discourse, famous for its images of the "birds of the air" and the "lilies of the field," establishes the basic setting in which the poverty in spirit is examined, and Text 10 *d* reiterates in a new form Text 9, especially its concluding statement: "You cannot serve God and mammon" (6: 24).

The repetition of the phrase "do not be anxious" points to the three-step progression of Text 10: "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on" (Text 10 *a* – 6: 25); "Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'" (Text 10 *c* – 6: 31); "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself" (Text 10 *e* – 6: 34). This threefold repetition includes also enumerations of the most basic human needs – food, drink, and clothes. These appear in the first two texts, and the generated anxiety is implied in the third by the word *tomorrow*, stressing the orientation of anxiety toward the future. The emphasis on anxiety about material security introduces into Text 10 another aspect of the power of mammon. It stresses mammon's dual control of individuals and society. On the one hand, this control is enforced by anxiety of death; on the other, by the implied promise of absolute material security, and abundance of food, drink, and clothes, which in their superfluity equal surrogate

immortality, allegedly the ultimate security against deprivation and death.

The basic, most obvious repetitions are supported by recurring explanations, following the sentences on anxiety in Text 10 a: "Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?" (6: 25); Text 10 c, "For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all" (6: 32); and Text 10 e, "... for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Let the day's own trouble be sufficient for the day" (6: 34). The repetition of the explanations is more revealing by contrast to the triple, virtually unchanged, references to the anxiety. The explanations differ considerably, introducing with each step of the progression a new angle of observation on mammon and poverty.

The first explanatory remark (6: 25) separates the act from its objective. The act, the material support of human existence, is subordinated to that existence: "Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?" (6: 25). The implication of this hierarchy is that the human being is usually sacrificed for the acquisition of commodities. The separation of humanity's existence from its basic needs is as elementary as the juxtaposition of nature, including people themselves, created by God, and the objects of civilization, created by human beings. The food and clothes that support human existence belong to economics or human civilization. The implied hierarchy, according to which the products of civilization are valued more highly than nature or a person, is replaced by a new hierarchy, with God's creation placed above human creations: life is more important than food, and the human body more than clothes. By this shift the universal hierarchy is established in regard to the creators: God, the creator of humanity, stands higher than the human creators of all the products of civilization.

This point of the first explanation is further developed in the second (6: 32). It is stated first that the supremacy of God, the creator of humanity and nature, is not known to the Gentiles who, therefore, value the commodities of their own creation higher than their lives and their bodies created by God: "For the Gentiles seek all these things." Secondly, humanity's preoccupation with its own creations is declared superfluous anyway, since God is aware of the basic needs of His creation: "and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all" (6: 32).

The third explanation establishes the hierarchy in regard to the perception of time — "for tomorrow will be anxious for itself" (6: 34) — since the anxiety results from acute awareness of the future, which is unknown and, therefore, threatening. The new system limits the perception of time to the present, to timeless synchronicity, and introduces actually the perception of time found in the Beatitudes, alien to the usual diachronic perception of human existence. Thus, the three explanations refer to the Beatitudes: fearlessness in the temporal world is engendered by the awareness of the source of all life, God; by the reluctance to overestimate the value of human creations, material security; and by the synchronic perception of human existence while ignoring its outcome — death in all its manifestations.

These three explanations are prefaced by two sections, Text 10 *b* (Look at the birds), preceding the second explanatory remark, and Text 10 *d* (His kingdom), immediately preceding the conclusion of the text.

The longest section, Text 10 *b*, must be examined separately. The five verses of this subtext are divided into two pairs,

6: 26, 27:

> Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his span of life?

and 6: 28, 29:

> And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

followed by the conclusion:

> But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith? (6: 30).

The two pairs of verses have almost identical verses referring to "the birds of the air" and "the lilies of the field" respectively, using them as examples of God's care for His creation. These examples taken from fauna and flora are again, as in Text 10 *a* (Do not be anxious), compared with the ordinary hierarchy of values. In both comparisons

with humanity its total powerlessness in regard to God's creation, namely, to human beings themselves, is the point. "And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his span of life?" (6:27) is paralleled by the second comparison: "yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these [lilies of the field]" (6:29). The partial summary and comment of Text 10 *b* (Look at the birds) appears in the last verse: "But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith?" (6:30).

We can observe in the concluding verse of Text 10 *b* (6:30) a remarkable shift in the emotional and stylistic treatment of nature. In the previous two parts of Text 10 *b* the "birds of the air" and the "lilies of the field" were attractively described as idyllic living creatures recalling the Garden of Eden. This idyllic state was further emphasized by comparisons with the anxiety of human beings. In the last verse, quoted above, the roles of the actors are reversed, however; the poetic "lilies of the field" and by implication "the birds of the air" are denigrated. "The lilies of the field" become simply "the grass of the field" with *the* repetition "of the field" emphasizing the parallelism. While initially the impression is that the birds and the lilies are secure, perhaps immortal, as if living in the Garden of Eden, in the concluding verse destruction and death are explicitly and frighteningly presented: "... grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven ..." (6:30). This sudden turn, certainly not accidental within a short text, deserves special attention.

The two contrasting descriptions of nature are not mutually exclusive but rather complement each other. While the first idyllic picture was presented, the Speaker and the audience were, of course, fully aware of the transience of all natural phenomena, and while the last, rather sinister, picture was presented, the previous, carefree state of nature was still in the minds of the audience. The system, consisting of these two contrasts, actually implies a paradise of fools, or rather a paradise of innocence, by which unawareness of the inevitable catastrophe, in this case, death, allows enjoyment of the ephemeral present. This state of mind is advocated in Text 10 *b*: the birds and lilies are not anxious about their life and their future simply because of their lack of cognizance of their transience. Their innocence is recommended to humanity as well, for the anxiety of imminent death appears senseless

anyway: "And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his span of life?" (6:27).

If this suggestion stunned the audience, the second explanatory section, Text 10 *d* (His kingdom), must have softened the shock. Referring to the kingdom of God, this text reads, "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well" (6:33). The following Text 10 *e* ("Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow . . .," 6:34), as was already pointed out, changes the perception of time and in interaction with Text 10 *d* (His kingdom) points to the present state of bliss, introduced in the first beatitude: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (5:3). Consequently, the innocence of "the birds of the air" and "the lilies of the field" on the new plane of existence, on the plane of the Beatitudes, is the newly revealed wisdom, which fully acknowledges human death but confronts it with fearlessness and the resolute adaptation of life according to the nature of immortality. Within this wisdom death neither signifies mortality nor precludes immortality.

Another aspect of Text 10 *b* is its implicit treatment and clarification of the concept of poverty, which is usually considered negative. It is viewed as the absence of those commodities that affluence provides, the most important being security for the future. Thus, the definition of poverty depends on the degree of affluence that the society in question has established. Such a definition implies that the expected norm for human existence is some degree of material security, and poverty must be regarded as a deviation from this norm. Whether or not every person is aware of this peculiar, prevailing attitude, almost everyone shares it to a larger or lesser degree. Text 10 *b* however, through the idyllic imagery of the birds and lilies reverses the definition: poverty is elevated to the norm of human existence, and any deviation from this norm is regarded as a perversion. Thus, humanity appears to be meant to live in what would normally be called poverty with only basic sustenance as "the birds of the air" and "the lilies of the field" have. On the other hand, one can assume that the Speaker regards affluence as an abnormality or disease, and, therefore, as frightening as poverty is usually perceived to be. Thus, in the Speaker's *Weltanschauung* we can discern a total reversal of commonly accepted economics.

The interrelation of Text 10 *b* with the remaining sections of Text 10 indicates that the recurring phrase "do not be anxious" really signifies poverty, since the model for existence is the elementary sustenance of nature. The Weltanschauung presented in the Sermon on the Mount, including the external and internal domains of human existence, initially introduced with such force in the Beatitudes, also emerges in Text 10. The internal state of freedom from the anxiety of death and of material insecurity inevitably generates its external counterpart — poverty.

Finally, one striking paradigm extends throughout Text 10 — those who seek material security. This paradigm has four components: Christ's audience who listened to Him on the slopes of the hill and whom He addressed in the second-person plural; those who being anxious cannot "add one cubit to his span of life" (6:27); Solomon, who "in all his glory was not arrayed like one of [the liles of the field]," (6:29); and the Gentiles who "seek all these things," that is, material security (6:32). This paradigm establishes a universal model, with a cross-section of humanity seeking affluence and security. The poor who were present, and Solomon, who was the richest king of Israel, comparable only to Christ's contemporary, Herod, interact with each other, while the people of Israel interact with the rest of the human race — the Gentiles. Thus, the poor and the rich, the people of God and the pagans, all share the same fallacy. They seek protection from death in affluence and wealth while neither group "can add one cubit to [its] span of life." Both are equally powerless in regard to the major issue: preventing death in the temporal world.

Text 10 in its entirety is closely linked to Text 9 and most directly to the condemnation of devotion to mammon. Text 9 offers two alternatives — service to God or service to mammon, while in Text 10 the alternatives are different: service to mammon or natural poverty. From these two sequences it is deduced that service to God presupposes natural and freely accepted poverty.

Within the sixth chapter, which focuses on the application of the Beatitudes in a society with definite religious norms, Text 10 occupies a special position. On the one hand, it extends the issue as broadly as possible, with nature as the model for its central concept — freely accepted poverty, the antipode to self-affirmation. On the other hand, the intimate tie with Text 9, in which mammon, gold, and affluence

are granted religious, but godless, stature, indicates that poverty as presented in Text 10 in the image of "the birds of the air" and "the lilies of the field" is also regarded as a religious, or sacred, phenomenon inherent in those who serve God. The natural state of poverty is sanctified in terms of the theocentric model depicted in Texts 9 and 10.

The First Half of Matthew 7

Chapter 7, the last of the Sermon on the Mount, seems to be a collection of loosely interrelated passages or texts without an invariant. In contrast to Chapter 5, which combines both universal and traditional contexts, and Chapter 6, which projects Christ's teaching onto society in its two aspects, religious and economic, closely integrated in the time of Christ, Chapter 7 appears heterogenous. A brief examination, however, demonstrates that while comprising a larger number of individual texts than Chapters 5 and 6 (eight instead of four and six), Chapter 7 also contains two specific contexts: first, personal relationships (7: 1 – 12) and, second, the implementation of the teachings of Christ (7: 13 – 27). Thus, Chapter 7 naturally divides into almost independen⁺ halves. It is essential to keep the two specific contexts of Chapter 7 in mind within the broader frame of the Sermon on the Mount with its four successive contexts: in Chapter 5, the universal and traditional; in Chapter 6, the religious and economic within an organized society; in the first half of Chapter 7, the context of personal relationships, and in the second half the context of the implementation of Christ's sermon.*

All the components of the Sermon on the Mount, however, are mutually inclusive, as are the four contexts listed above. Most of them coexist in each text of the sermon, and the sequence of the contexts can be identified only according to their predominance in a given part.

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* There are, of course, other subdivisions of the sermon possible, however, structurally unsound. For example, Hans Windisch divides the sermon in six sections. See his *The Meaning of the Sermon on the Mount*, The Westminster Press, 1951, pp. 62 – 3.

Text 11 (Judge not) (7: 1,2)

> 7: 1 Judge not, that you be not judged.
>   2 For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and the measure
>   you give will be the measure you get.

Text 11 (7: 1, 2) is a syntactic unit, the first verse offering a state-
ment, and the second, its explanation. These verses refer to two
judgments, the first of which the addressee may perform, while the
second is ambiguous. Perhaps the second judgment is meant to rep-
resent the attitude of the community to the addressee. Such a reading
of Text 11 would suggest a perfect balance in human relations, a sort
of worldly security. The meaning of these verses, however, differs from
this interpretation.

The fact that Text 11 refers to God's judgment as the counterpart to
human judgment can be deduced from the established ideology in the
Sermon on the Mount. The Beatitudes convey this ideology from the very
beginning of the text, in which righteousness is blessed on the transcen-
dental plane but is trampled on by society. The eight beatitude introduces
this contrast with unique force: "Blessed are those who are persecuted
for rigtheousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (5: 10). This
principle of inverse equity is further developed in the ninth beatitude.
Thus, according to the discourse, the world persecutes righteousness, as
was already demonstrated, and this very fact may constitute bliss in terms
of both present existence and transcendental, or deathfree, life — the
kingdom of heaven. In regard to Text 11 this general principle of the
Sermon on the Mount signifies that those who do not judge now do not
have any reason to expect that they will be spared judgment, condemna-
tion, or slander by others. The contrary might be the case. But what those
who do not judge in the temporal world can hope for is that in the
kingdom of heaven they will be spared harsh judgment.

Christ's audience was perfectly prepared to understand Text 11
correctly, not only because of the general principle of inverse equity
already established in the Beatitudes, but also by Text 4 f (Love for
enemies) at the very end of the same Chapter 5:

> For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax
> collectors do the same? And if you salute only your brethren, what more are
> you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? (5: 46, 47)

In this case, of course, the system of inverse equity established in the Beatitudes seems to be denied by the examples of the exchange of love for love and a greeting or friendship for the same. Such an exchange, however, is practiced in most defensive groups. In light of Text 11 this reference to self-serving love and friendship clarifies that refraining from judging will not prevent judgment by others. This protection occurs, of course, but within social groups or a family, in which this type of mutual restraint from judging one another is a currency of exchange among the members of the group. Since this exchange of kindnesses was already caustically criticized in Text 4 *f*, the audience listening to Text 11 must have been fully aware of the nature of the judgment in the explanatory verse: "For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get" (7: 2). It is the judgment of God, for it follows the general system of inverse equity established in the Beatitudes. Those who judge and condemn at the moment appear superior to the subject of their judgment, and this presumption of superiority makes them inferior in the eyes of God.

Text 11 also has more direct interrelations with the immediately previous texts than with Text 4 *f*. Progressing backwards, we perceive the relationship of Text 11 with the last two verses in Text 6: "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (6: 14, 15). Forgiving precludes judging. Further back, the fifth petition in the Lord's Prayer makes the same point: "And forgive us our debts, As we also have forgiven our debtors" (6: 12). Among the beatitudes the fifth one refers to the same: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (5: 7). This reiteration of the same principle from different viewpoints in different terms and contexts, links all these texts and directly relates Text 11 and the Beatitudes.

The inverse equity of the Beatitudes, one of their major signs, is also characteristic of Text 11 because judging, condemning, and in this way establishing superiority is one of the basic mechanisms of self-defense, self-assertion, and finally of the struggle for survival. The judgment of a person by another establishes a certain hierarchy, and the judge always stands above the one who is judged. This relationship can be public or kept "in secret," but in either case it provides a sense

of security, a sense of control of and authority over another, the justification for a person's existence. Thus, the anxiety of death leads to judgment, and for this reason it is repudiated. It is utterly unthinkable that those who are poor in spirit, meek, merciful, pure in heart, or mourning would judge anyone; the very model of the blessed in the Beatitudes precludes one person's judging another.

Any judgment presumes a thorough knowledge of the law and the empirical reality to which the law is applied. Thus, the person who judges assumes expert knowledge. This aspect of the act of judgment relates Text 11 to Text $4d$ (But I say to you – Oaths, 5: 33 – 37), for in the latter, Christ demonstrates that such an assumption is fallacious and testifies only to the desire for self-assertion. On the other hand, the same problem of objective knowledge is connoted in the religious context of Text 5 (6: 1 – 6, 16 – 18), which advocates righteousness in secret, seen only by God. Thus, access to the objective and, most importantly, complete picture of the facts to be judged may be excluded. Finally, the delight in judging refers to Text 8 (6: 22, 23), in which the preoccupation with the evil of the world is represented by the image of an eye that is not sound and, therefore, deepens the inner darkness of a human being. The delight in noticing the evil in others may be regarded as a symptom of a malfunctioning eye. The awareness of the evil, but with the opposite effect, can be seen in the second beatitude (Mourning, 5: 4). Here this awareness causes, not judgment, but mourning, and serves self-contraction by alienating the person from the ongoing carnival of self-assertion in pursuit of success and happiness. Thus, the message of Text 11 is inherent in the general ideology of the Sermon on the Mount.

The principle of the defenseless life that was revealed in a universal setting in the Beatitudes and then repeated in Texts 5 and 6, in the framework of a religious society, now in Text 11 is applied to personal relationships. Thus, a new set of references begins to predominate at this point in the Speaker's discourse.

Text 12 (Speck and log) (7: 3 – 5)

7: 3 Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?

4 Or how can you say to your brother, "Let me take the speck out of your eye," when there is the log in your own eye?

5 You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

Text 12 (7: 3 – 5) develops the metaphor of the speck and the log with the latter placed in the eye of the addressee. The foreign objects, one minute, the other enormous, in the eye signify two degrees of injury, or spiritual defect. In the first verse (7: 3) the person with the greater defect finds pleasure in observing the smaller defect of another, while in the next verse (7: 4) this cognizance progresses into hypocritical compassion, the desire to cure the other's spiritual defect. The last verse shows that the one with the gigantic defect, the log, should first cure himself or herself in order to be able to cure another and that any attempt to cure made by the one with the larger defect is insincere or hypocritical: "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye ..." (7: 5). The contrast of the degrees of imperfection is repeated in inverse order by the assumed superiority of the one with the greater spiritual defect over the other with a much lesser flaw. This inversion transpires from the attempt of the first to cure the second.

The obvious paradigms of the speck and the log perhaps obscure the most important paradigm of cognizance. The first components of this paradigm, the verbs "to see" and "to notice," used negatively, appear in the first verse: "Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?" (7: 3). The cognition in this verse is obviously selective: human beings see what they want to see and do not perceive that which threatens self-confidence; that is, they do not register their own defects. On this level Text 12 reiterates the basic message of the Sermon on the Mount: defensive existence in the "shadow of death" (4: 16). Text 12 is thus closely related to Text 11, for the theme of judging another is also present in the observing of another's defect.

The following two verses (7: 4, 5) introduce healing, proclaimed as impossible in the last component of the paradigm of cognizance: "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will

see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye" (7: 5). Thus, two types of cognition are connoted in the text. The first appears at the beginning and applies only to the imperfection in one's surroundings, the defects of another; thus this type of cognition is that of the unsound eye as referred to in Text 8: "... if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of darkness" (6: 23). The second type of cognition, conveyed by the last component of the paradigm ("and then you will see clearly"), perceives the good works and light, is not defensive, is open to mercy, and, therefore, enables a person to cure another. When those with the first type of cognition attempt to heal, two facts emerge: their inability and their hypocrisy because they do not intend to heal. The hypocrisy transpires from the fact that the intention to heal, that is, to eliminate the spiritual defect, could be generated only by love for spiritual perfection, that is, as revealed in the Beatitudes, for the emancipation from the tyranny of the anxiety of death. Such love would result first in self-emancipation. In Text 12 it is expressed by the would-be healers removing the logs from their own eyes, perfecting their own vision, thus making their eyes sound. One with a sound eye, as indicated in Text 8, is on the way to perfection: "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light" (6: 22). The body full of light cannot be understood within the system of the Sermon on the Mount other than as holiness: we should only recall Text 2, which refers to those who having heard the revelation of the Beatitudes are expected to implement it — "You are the light of the world" (5: 14) — and two verses further — "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (5: 16). Thus, the paradigms of light and cognizance reappear throughout the entire text of the sermon, and in their positive variants they signify service to God and holiness. Text 12 demands the holiness of those who engage in any kind of spiritual healing. Most important, however, is that holiness is accompanying cognition. The anxiety of death, reducing sight and hindering cognition, leaves only a part of the universe visible, a part carefully selected according to a person's aspirations for security. Because of such selection this person sees the speck in the other's eye, for it provides a sense of superiority, and misses the log in his or her own eye, for it would reduce self-confidence.

This selective perception of the universe is opposed to the indiscriminate perception of those who are fearless of death. We cannot miss the parallel to this opposition in Text 4*f*, which deals with love: "For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?" (5: 46). It is the carefully selected objects of love as well as of cognition that serve a person's sense of safety and security. This selective pseudo-cognition and pseudo-love contrast with the indiscriminate love and cognition that signal emancipation from the anxiety of death. Text 4*f* illustrates God's ideal indiscrimination: "he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust" (5: 45).

Text 12, as was shown, is closely related to Texts 2, 7, and 8, for it dwells on the problem of relating to the world because of the cognition of good. Text 12 with two closely interwoven subjects – cognition and spiritual healing – interacts with two neighboring texts: Text 11, in which judgment is related to cognition, and Text 13, in which spiritual healing is examined anew.

Text 13 (Dogs and swine) (7: 6)

7: 6 Do not give dogs what is holy; and do not throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.

Text 13 (7: 6) has a symmetrical structure with three interacting binary oppositions apparent after the first reading. The first is the addressees, those who heard the Sermon on the Mount, juxtaposed to dogs and swine – voracious animals. The second binary opposition consists of the addressees' values – that which is holy – and treasures – the pearls representing the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount – contrasting with another set of merely connoted values, for those of the dogs and swine obviously differ from those of the addressees. The third binary opposition consists of two attitudes: first, the addressees' benevolent offer to the dogs and swine and, second, the rejection by the animals of what was offered.

The surface structure of the text, consisting exclusively of binary oppositions, suggests that there is no singular component in the text. With this assumption in mind, we must examine the seemingly isolated

component, the extreme violence of the dogs' and swine's response to the offering that those who heard the Beatitudes can make.

The answer to this question is even more desirable in light of the enigma in the concluding phrase of Text 13: "... and turn again and rend you" (KJV, 7: 6), which implies hatred of the offerers, those who have received and pass on the lesson of the Sermon on the Mount. While the first reaction of the dogs and swine may be a hostile audience's profanation of proffered values, the second reaction, endangering not the object of the offer, but the offerers themselves, cannot be explained by profanation alone. The explanation depends on the specific definition of the values signified by the phrase, "what is holy" and "your pearls." In the context of the Sermon on the Mount, they would seem to refer to the principle revealed in the Beatitudes − the bliss of defenselessness and eternal life in the kingdom of heaven. A multitude of individual texts following the Beatitudes testifies to the predominance of this major invariant throughout the entire sermon. It will suffice to recall Text 2 with its powerful metaphors, "You are the salt of the earth" and "You are the light of the world," meaning those who embody the revelation of the Beatitudes, and Text 4*f*, which exhorts the audience to strive for the highest possible standard ("You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect," 5: 48), in order to see that within the communicative system of the Sermon on the Mount the highest value under discussion, besides the heavenly Father, who is referred to as the absolute supremacy, is the principle of the kingdom of heaven. Thus the pearls and what is holy in Text 13 signify fearlessness in regard to the power of death with the resulting bliss of defenseless life equated to the kingdom of heaven in the right part of the Beatitudes.

The fearless self-exposure to persecution and death, the likely outcome of the self-contraction of those who follow Christ's principle of the kingdom of heaven, must be regarded as the most radical denial of the prevailing philosophy of human existence under "the shadow of death," namely, the total, although unconscious, subordination to the power of the anxiety of death with the entailed self-assertion in the context of the struggle for survival. To the purveyors of such a philosophy, or Weltanschauung, the very suggestion that they become defenseless followers of Christ, like those who are meek, turn the other cheek and love their enemies, must appear insulting or at least mocking. Such

a suggestion would tactlessly imply the fallacy of self-assertion, or it would be regarded as an attempt to inflict harm by persuading people to accept an ideology that leads to self-destruction in the temporal world. The insulting effect explains the trampling underfoot of the new principle, while the second, the threat to security, may provoke a violent attack against the offerer of such a threatening teaching, a desire to destroy such an allegedly dangerous and evil person. Thus, dogs and swine, reacting violently toward both the teaching and the teacher, illustrate the eighth and ninth beatitudes, referring directly to the persecution of those who, free from the anxiety of death, repudiate self-defense and the struggle for survival.

The entire system of binary oppositions in Text 13 follows:

1. Offerer — receiver;
2. the offerer's values — the receiver's values;
3. the offerer's attitude — the receiver's response;
4. the offerer's denial of the receiver's values — the receiver's denial of the offerer's values;
5. the offerer's alleged threat to the security of the receiver — the receiver's real threat to the offerer's safety.

This set of five binary oppositions and, most importantly, the fourth and fifth ones, are the key to the interpretation of this text within the framework of the Sermon on the Mount.

The message of Text 13 supersedes the notion of profanation, although it is certainly present. The far-reaching message of the text is so significant that profanation *per se* becomes peripheral. Text 13 represents a universal model of humanity, specifically human relationships, in regard to the principle of the kingdom of heaven. What was implied in the Beatitudes, namely the status quo of temporal existence, is openly depicted in Text 13, imaged as dogs and swine, signifying those who live according to the commonly accepted code of behavior.

Why does Text 13 single out dogs and swine? The customary claim that dogs and swine are mentioned because they are unclean animals appears insufficient. The main purpose of this metaphor is to represent the most furious resistance to the principle of self-contraction, self-denial, and defenselessness, suggested by the extreme voracity of swine and homeless dogs in the cities of that time. Projected onto human society, voracity signifies extreme cupidity, already dealt with in Text

9 (6:24) with its reference to mammon. The direct relationship of Text 13 to Text 9 is obvious; in this respect, however, Text 13 contributes significantly to the subject of human relations: it shows that the servants of mammon can be quite violent and dangerous to those who oppose their master.

Text 13 is also directly related to Text 12 (7:3 – 5) and the subject of spiritual healing. While Text 12 conveys the prerequisite for any attempt to offer spiritual healing, namely, the spiritual health of the healer, Text 13 suggests another aspect – the wise selection of the object of the healing effort and the avoidance of those fully committed to mammon and the struggle for survival.

Text 13 presents a dark picture of human relations in respect to the Beatitudes, and anyone hearing these words might ask in profound desperation: What is the chance of this teaching's flourishing in a world as dark as ours? To this despair Christ offers His discourse in Text 14.

Text 14 (Golden rule) (7: 7 – 12)

Text 14 a (Ask) (7: 7,8)

    7: 7 Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

      8 For every one who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

Text 14 b (Fatherhood) (7: 9 – 11)

    9 Or what man of you, if his son asks him for a loaf, will give him a stone?

    10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent?

    11 If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him?

Text 14 c (The law) (7: 12)

    12 So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.

Text 14 (7: 7 – 12) is divided into three sections. The first, Text 14 a, consists of two verses (7: 7, 8) linked by three repeated verbs – to ask, to seek, and to knock – and by three results – to receive, to find, and to open. The second section, Text 14 b, consists of three

verses (7: 9 – 11) convincing the audience of God's responsiveness. The last verse (7: 12), Text 14 *c*, is the general deduction of Text 14 and of the entire first part of Chapter 7, Texts 11 – 14.

Text 14 is perhaps the clearest in the Sermon on the Mount when perceived in the context of Text 13. This context provides the listener or the reader with the proper understanding of the emphasis.

In the first two verses the saturation of verbs denoting acute need, following one another in two sequences and stressed by the verbs of response also repeated twice in the parallel sequences, establishes emotional tension caused by anxiety: "ask," "seek," "knock," further repeated by "who asks," "who seeks," "who knocks"; counterposed to the reassurance of the responding verbs: "it will be given," "you will find," "it will be opened to you," repeated in the second sequence as "receives," "finds," "opened." The emotional duality and tension of these two verses is an extension of the desperation generated by the human model of Text 13. The reassuring, peaceful response to this anxiety is guaranteed by the connoted presence and action of the Father, who is in heaven, who seemed absent and passive in Text 13. Thus, Text 14 indicates that no matter how dark the temporal reality, God is in heaven, and He does listen and respond.

Text 14 *b* (Fatherhood) establishes the image of benevolent human fatherhood, projected onto God (7: 11). Despite the fact that the benevolence of human fatherhood is the subject of this verse, the audience, nevertheless, is openly called evil. Apparently even seemingly good blood relations are still regarded as self-serving or self-extension by procreation: "If you then, who are evil ..." This phrase refers to the model of Text 13 and contrasts it with the absolute good of God. Therefore, the tension between the two extremes sensed in Text 14 *a* (Ask) is repeated, perhaps on a lesser scale, in verse 11.

The concluding Text 14 *c* (The law) returns the discourse to the confrontation of two principles, the anxiety of death dominating human temporal existence and fearlessness in regard to death, as revealed in the Beatitudes. The formula that is called for some reason the golden rule, closes Text 14: "So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them" (7: 12). There is no indication whatsoever that the person following this rule will receive the same in return from others. On the contrary, this rule exposes its follower to great practical danger and possibly to the bliss of the Beatitudes.

This interpretation can be clearly seen if we probe the meaning of the phrase "whatever you wish that men would do to you." In the context of the Sermon on the Mount and especially preceding Text 13, which depicts persecution for righteousness, it is most likely that this phrase means peace, nonviolent relations. Human beings do not wish to be threatened by others or attacked because of their insecurity and anxiety. Thus, they should not compete; should not threaten others with their own energy, power, rights, and wealth; in short, should not struggle for survival. The final verse in Text 14 returns the listener to the principle of fearlessness in regard to death, that is, to the main point of the Beatitudes.

The sudden turn in the discourse to the golden rule of verse 12 must be examined in the context of Text 14, which established trust in God's assistance after the bleakness of Text 13. In this sequence of ideas verse 12 brings the addressee back to the human model of Text 13 after God's corrective benevolence has been established in Text 14. Thus, verse 12 urges the listener and the reader to look fearlessly at the world so morbidly presented in Text 13, and while aware of the resistance and threat with which the world responds to the message of the Sermon on the Mount, to aspire in this desperate situation to strength and protection from God and to continue to follow the principle of Christ and the kingdom of heaven. In this way verse 12 recalls the Beatitudes.

There is a difference, however, between the context in which the Beatitudes are revealed and that of verse 12. It is not in the universal context that the principle of the kingdom of heaven appears in Text 14, but rather in the context of human relations to which the entire first part of Chapter 7 is devoted.

The personal relationship of one human to another is first illuminated in Text 11 (Do not judge) containing the basic structure of inverse equity characteristic of the Beatitudes. Human relationships and the attempt at healing develop in Text 12, which examines the impotence and hypocrisy of a seemingly benevolent attitude. In the following Text 13 the principle of Christ and the kingdom of heaven is offered to those who serve mammon with devotion and are deeply engaged in the struggle for survival, probably successfully. Text 14 assures people that they can count on God's response and assistance and therefore urges them to follow fearlessly the principle of Christ

despite all the danger it generates and the adverse reaction of others. The second half of Chapter 7, which closes the Sermon on the Mount, projects the principle of Christ onto those who have already accepted and are implementing it either individually or in a community.

The Second Half of Matthew 7

Text 15 (Two gates) (7: 13,14)

7: 13 Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads
to destruction, and those who enter by it are many.
14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who
find it are few.

Verses 7: 13, 14 comprising Text 15 are linked by the metaphor of
the two ways and the two gates, narrow and wide, entered respectively
by the minority and the majority of people and leading to life or to
destruction. The audience of the Sermon on the Mount is advised to
follow the minority: "Enter by the narrow gate" (7: 13). The remaining
discourse explains the initial statement in two consecutive sentences,
each beginning with the conjunction "for."

The structure of this text is peculiar. The initial statement, referring
to the narrow gate, is first explained by the characteristics of its
opposite: "for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to
destruction, and those who enter by it are many" (7: 13). Thus the
superiority of the narrow gate is explained first, not by its own merits,
but by four characteristics of the contrasting way – its easiness, its
wideness, its destination, and its use by many – while only one of
these characteristics, the destination, is negative, and the remaining
three appear from the ordinary viewpoint rather attractive.

The second explanation of the initial statement contrasts the broad
gate with the narrow way: "For the gate is narrow and the way is
hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few" (7: 14). The
sequence of the opening statement and the two explanations is contrary
to what we might expect, namely, the exhortation to take the narrow

way followed by its characteristics. On the contrary, the description of the wide way appears first, reflecting the experience of the average person. The wide gate and way are obvious, therefore, familiar to the audience, while the narrow way is obscure. However, beginning the explanation with the familiar way and supplying it with three seemingly positive characteristics have a shocking effect, for the third one, the destination, which is destruction, could not be anticipated because of the two preceding positive characteristics ("easy" and "wide"). Further shock occurs after the destination of the way is revealed: it turns out that despite the fact that it leads to destruction, it is followed by many, the majority of humanity, in other words. The second explanation is formulated, at first glance at least, in a parallel manner to the first one. The shocking element in both explanations represents a new model of human existence reversing the one commonly accepted. In this model the majority is wrong.

Beneath the formal similarity of the two explanations, there lies a significant difference, for the second explanation does not refer to "entering" as does the first but to "finding" the narrow gate and the narrow way. Thus, the contrast between the wideness and narrowness in the two explanations, besides the hardship, also refers to their visibility. One way is exposed − it is wide and many walk it; the other is inconspicuous and only a few can find it. Thus, Text 15 offers two clarifications of the initial statement, the first concerning the two different destinations and the second concerning the accessibility of the two ways, which augments the basic message of the text, connoting that the knowledge of the majority is incomplete. As those who find the narrow way are fewer than those who seek it, finding it would seem a special achievement.

The necessity to find the narrow way, included in the system of parallelism, reorients the entire text and gives it a new turn. While dealing with individual texts within the Sermon on the Mount, we must remember that in each case the audience is the same − the disciples and the crowd on the slopes of the hill. Therefore, we must consider the slow development of the entire discourse and pay attention to prior texts. By Text 15 the greatest part of the sermon has already been delivered so that this text could be perceived in light of most of the major points of the sermon. Among these points the elaboration on human cognition occupies, as we have seen, a prominent place as

does the system of inverse equity, which directly refers to the Beatitudes. Text 15 contains both these elements. The second explanation introduces the idea of cognition, and the idea of inverse equity transpires from the advice to pass through the gate which apparently is more difficult for the majority of people to find. Text 15 also indicates that the way leading to destruction is identifiable by very specific signs: it is conspicuous, convenient, and easy to follow, that is, it appears attractive and, more obviously, crowded. Because it is stated that the way leading to life is difficult to find, simple deduction reveals that the way leading to destruction is easy to find, and, therefore, the sign of the broad way is its conspicuousness.

The two symptoms, one presumably attractive, though revealing the way to destruction, and one seemingly repelling, though pointing the way to life, interact with the system of inverse equity and, therefore, with the Beatitudes. It has already been pointed out that those referred to in the left part of the Beatitudes go virtually unnoticed in the world. These persons form a sort of spiritual underground; they remain unknown.

Text 5 (Secret righteousness) which deals with the theme of cognition of conspicuous good deeds, also makes this point. At the same time Text 5 contains the principle of inverse equity, which also links it directly to the Beatitudes. However, while the Beatitudes place the inconspicuousness of the blessed in a universal context, and Text 5 places the same quality in a social context, Text 15 demonstrates this quality in the context of the implementation of Christ's teaching by those who seek the way to life and need practical guidance. This guidance in terms of cognition is rendered by specific signs revealing the two gates and the two ways. The method of analysis, namely, the examination of the conspicuousness and general popularity of various modes of existence is therefore provided and is further discussed in Text 16.

Text 16 (False prophets) (7: 15 – 20)

7: 15   Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly
        are ravenous wolves.
    16   You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs
        from thistles?
    17   So, every sound tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears evil fruit.
    18   A sound tree cannot bear evil fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.
    19   Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.
    20   Thus you will know them by their fruits.

Text 16 (7: 15 – 20) begins with a warning against false prophets, that is, teachers and leaders with selfish motivations, who being inwardly wolves, come disguised as sheep. However, the major part of the text (7: 16 – 20) concerns the problem of recognizing such spurious leaders. These four verses are framed by the same statement emphasizing cognition: "You will know them by their fruits" (7: 16, 20). This quote first appears immediately after the description of the false prophets' disguise (7: 15), thus emphasizing the cognitive aspect of Text 16.

The remaining text, beginning with the second sentence of verse 16 through verse 19, conveys the homogeneity of the internal and external aspects of a human being, of a person's essence and acts. This message is conveyed by the metaphor of a plant and its fruits ("Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles?", 7: 16), followed by the generalization that a sound tree cannot produce bad fruit or vice versa (7: 17, 18). This basic theme of the similitude of a being and its fruit is touched upon in the first verse of the text (7: 15), in which the false prophets "inwardly are ravenous wolves" while disguising themselves in "sheep's clothing." Such a disguise, according to the following text, can be recognized, as explained.

Text 16 extracted from the Sermon on the Mount must sound like the utterance of an extremely naive person who does not know disguise, pretense, forgery, and all the refined methods of deceit that human beings have developed. However, in the context of the Sermon on the Mount, Text 16 appears much more realistic. It is not any ordinary deception that the text deals with but the pretense of a wolf to be a sheep. This pair of animals is selected for this text, not because sheep form the flock of Christ's followers. This interpretation would omit the sign *wolf* and what it stands for. The attribute of the wolf,

"ravenous," connotes by contrast the characteristic of the sheep, which is the reason for its selection: its peacefulness, lack of aggressiveness, and defenselessness. In figurative terms the sheep offers all that it has — its wool, its skin, and its meat — while asking for very little in return, mainly for protection from ravenous wolves. Thus, in Text 16 the sheep and wolves must be examined jointly, for in their contrast lies the meaning of this pair of signs.

For the audience of the Sermon on the Mount, who had already heard the Beatitudes, the sheep must have signified the blessed, who contrast completely with the rapacious, voracious wolves. Thus, the disguise mentioned in the first verse of Text 16 connotes the pretense of representing the human model revealed in the Beatitudes.

Such a pretense cannot succeed, since it entails the definite risk of social degradation and the destruction of the pretender, which outweigh any practical benefit that such a disguise could offer. No one can hypocritically act for long like the blessed in the Beatitudes, for the price would be too high; in other words, the self-contraction and fearlessness in the face of destruction and death must serve some higher value than mere temporal existence can offer. Without such a higher value risking this very existence would be absurd. Therefore, in terms of the metaphor in the text, a wolf would pretend to be a sheep only as long as this pretense did not threaten his well-being. However, as soon as such a threat occurred, the wolf or the false prophet would disclose his true nature in self-defensive and self-inflating actions. This is the reason for such a blunt statement: "You will know them by their fruits" (7: 16,20). Thus, Christ's assurance that the false prophets will eventually be recognized by their self-defensive acts of aggression, cupidity, or self-assertion, is not so naive as it at first appears, but rather realistic.

Text 16 contains a relatively long section (7: 16 – 19) representing the human model, metaphorically rendered by good and bad plants. The assumed stability or inherent permanency of the nature of a plant may seem to contradict the meaning of this passage, and the purpose of the entire Sermon on the Mount, for from the very beginning in the Beatitudes a major effort is made to convince people to change their nature. The human model of the Beatitudes is, however, so basic and, by the same token, so profound that a simple change of behavior could never suffice. No one can *act* as meek or poor in spirit; a person can

only *be* such; otherwise he or she adopts the disguise of a wolf in sheep's clothing. Text 16 thus indicates that the entire Sermon on the Mount is based on the assumption that so-called human nature can evolve, that people are in control of their essence and can strive to change it. Thus, within the system of the sermon on the Mount and its human model, there is nothing inherent in a person, including the anxiety of death, that could prevent one from changing. The imagery of verses 7: 16 – 19 within the context of the sermon indicates that a bad tree can become a good one and begin to bear good fruit. The main point is, however, that without a profound change the bad tree will continue to bear bad fruit, just as a good tree, as long as it remains good, will bear good fruit. We can conclude from Text 16 that a person's deeds and essence correspond when security and death are concerned. Thus, any possibility of pretense or disguise on such a profound level is excluded.

Was text 16 comprehensible to the audience? Its location within the Sermon on the Mount assures its comprehension, for at this point the audience was already prepared for its message. Proceeding from the earliest passages relevant to the notion of the identification of a person's essence and deeds, we may recall Text 7 (Treasures in heaven, 6: 19 – 21) concluding with "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (6: 21), indicating the homogeneity of the values, aspirations, concerns, and, therefore, also the deeds, actions, and life style of a person. The same point is made by Text 9 (God and mammon, 6: 24) with its concluding maxim, "You cannot serve God and mammon," indicating that it is not a person's nature that determines his or her identity, but rather the choice of which master to serve. The inept healer in Text 12 (7: 3 – 5), who cannot see to remove a speck from another's eye because of the log in his or her own, in other words, who has not yet changed his or her own essence, also prepares the audience for comprehension. Furthermore, Text 13 (Dogs and swine, 7: 6), in which a person's ideology is defined precisely by the way he or she reacts to the message of the Beatitudes, also prepares for Text 16. Thus, a model of humanity, its character, its nature, and its deeds, as far as the message of deathfree life in the kingdom of heaven requires, is consistently shaped in the Sermon on the Mount from its very beginning, the Beatitudes, to the end.

Text 17 (Lord, Lord) (7: 21 – 23)

> 7: 21 Not every one who says to me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.
>
> 22 On that day many will say to me, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?"
>
> 23 And then will I declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from me, you evil-doers."

Verses 7: 21 – 23 (Text 17), united by the setting of the Last Judgment, refer to several essential aspects of the implementation of the revelation of the Beatitudes in human relationships and in that to God. Text 17 is the first concluding text of the second half of Chapter 7 that deals with those who took upon themselves the mission of the Beatitudes.

The fusion of the bliss with Christ is examined in the opening statement of the first verse in Text 17:

> Not every one who says to me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven (7: 21).

"Not every one . . ." distinguishes between nominal conversion to Christ by proclaiming Him Lord or Master, and a person's deeds. This phrase establishes two kinds of followers of the Beatitudes: those who merely confess the lordship of Christ and those who also implement Christ's teachings. The first verse (7: 21) establishes the hierarchy of these two components introduced as early as the ninth beatitude:

> Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account (5: 11).

or, as in the KJV, "for my sake." As was demonstrated, these three characteristics refer to the six central beatitudes (see Chart 6). Bliss, which opens the door to the deathless kingdom of heaven, is in the ninth beatitude equated to Christ.

The explanatory verses (7: 22, 23) focus on the first type of person whose essence is conveyed in the form of a dialogue projected onto the second coming of Christ and His judgment ("On that day," 7: 22). The dialogue begins somewhere in the middle, since the first utterance obviously represents a response to the preceding, omitted condemnation of those who only worshipped the name of Christ. They attempt to

reverse the verdict by justifying themselves in referring to their past deeds. The enumeration of their acts in the name of Christ is obviously truthful, for Christ's final response does not question or deny it. Thus, this dialogue actually shows exactly who stands before Christ. These people are worshippers of Christ personally, not passive, since they also prophesied, healed (cast out demons), and worked wonders – all in Christ's name. Christ's verdict, however, remains negative.

The seeming contradiction in this dialogue resolves itself as soon as the invariant of the three types of works is found. It is the superiority of those who, although in religious rather than material terms, place themselves above others. To prophesy, to cast out demons, and to work wonders imply superhuman power, therefore, a high degree of superiority, contrasting radically with the invariant of self-contraction and self-exposure to the threat of annihilation in the Beatitudes. Those three actions that appear in the dialogue are carefully selected; their sum does not reflect the human model in the Beatitudes. Those rejected by Christ in Text 17 are not persecuted, poor, meek, defenseless, merciful, or in search of peace. Text 17 carefully avoids these character-istics and advances instead the qualities of leadership, authority, and exclusiveness.

Another issue raised in Text 17 is Christ's response:

> And then will I declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from me, you evil-doers" (7: 23).

The paradox consists of a cognitive reversal. The defendants claim that they knew Christ, for they addressed Him "Lord, Lord" (7: 21) and performed their acts in His name. This knowledge of Christ is, however, repudiated by His claim that He never knew them because of their self-inflation – the invariant of their three actions. Thus, the text indicates that Christ is not present in acts of power and superiority on the temporal plane of human existence. The fact that power and superiority have been acquired and used in Christ's name is meaningless, for they do not assure emancipation from the anxiety of death secured by the voluntary accept-ance of defenselessness and vulnerability.

Christ calls the defendants "evil-doers," or perhaps more precisely, according to the KJV, "ye that work iniquity" (7: 23)*. The term

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* The noun, *iniquity*, stands for the Greek *lawlessness*. Thus the phrase would be in

iniquity can be understood as a violation of the generic purpose of things, of their nature, and, therefore, a distortion of a specific principle. This term within the context of Text 17 refers to the perverting of Christ's revelation by performing in His name self-asserting acts contrary to His principle and the heavenly kingdom. Serving security in the name of Christ appears in the text as a contradiction in terms and, thus, an iniquity. Therefore, we may deduce from Christ's final remark that only acts inflicting, by defenselessness, suffering on the doer are performed in the name of Christ, or for Christ's sake, and accord with the principle of the Sermon on the Mount. According to the Beatitudes, these acts signify bliss, or the heavenly kingdom.

The dialogue and especially Christ's concluding response connote that the phrase "for my sake" (5:11), equivalent to "for Christ's sake," or "in Christ's name," signifies the human acts performed through rejecting the anxiety of death and embracing the nature of the deathfree life of the heavenly kingdom. On the temporal plane this attitude is highly dangerous and deprives a person of any security in the broadest sense of the word, while on the transcendental plane it signifies bliss of the heavenly kingdom available even now in the present.

Text 17 is placed strategically right after the passage about recognizing false prophets (Text 16). They can be discovered by their deeds: "Thus you will know them by their fruits" (7:20). The metaphor of fruits is interpreted in Text 17, in which the defendants refer to their deeds for Christ. As these deeds were self-serving, self-asserting, and self-securing, Christ repudiates them. The interrelation between the structure of Texts 16 and 17 seems to indicate that within the system of the Sermon on the Mount the phrase "in the name of Christ" or "for Christ's sake" is synonymous with *in the name of*, or *for the sake of* — *deathless life*, which finally equates Christ and His principle with deathfree life within the empirical existence of a mortal. This blending of the basic concepts sheds additional light on the Beatitudes and establishes the intimate link between Christ and human suffering, the result being the sanctification of suffering, practical disadvantage,

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English, *ye that work lawlessness*. Within the context of the Sermon on the Mount the concept of law was clearly defined in Text 3 as the base for Christ's teaching which must be incorporated and surpassed. Thus in the language of the sermon *lawlessness* signifies a departure from the content of Christ's teaching.

poverty, grief, and deprivation. Those who accept suffering for themselves, even without a formal confession of Christ, are blessed in their partaking of the kingdom of heaven, as the Beatitudes show, while those who formally profess the lordship of Christ but are not willing or inclined to accept pain and anguish remain outside the kingdom of heaven according to Text 17.

Text 18 (Two builders) (7: 24 – 27)

7: 24 Every one then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a
       wise man who built his house upon the rock;
   25 and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon
       that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.
   26 And every one who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be
       like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand;
   27 and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against
       that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it.

The parable of the two builders, Text 18 (7: 24 – 27), can be regarded as the conclusion of the entire Sermon on the Mount. At the same time, however, Text 18 continues the theme of the preceding text and, therefore, functions also as the conclusion to the second part of Chapter 7, which deals with the implementation of Christ's principle. We shall begin with the latter and then turn to the former role of this text.

Text 18 distinguishes a person who only hears the Sermon on the Mount from another, who having heard it, also implements it. There is a similarity between them – their awareness of Christ's revelation; they differ, however, in what they do with this knowledge. This similarity and difference are rendered metaphorically by the two builders who build a house, one on rock, the other on sand. One house holds up against a storm; the other does not. Obviously, mere acceptance of Christ's teachings amounts to very little.

In this respect Text 18 continues the theme of Text 17, in which those who address Christ as "Lord, Lord" are obviously well acquainted with His teachings but, as we have seen, have not implemented them, for they have not exposed themselves by self-contraction to the danger of defenseless existence. The dialogue in Text 17 between Christ and

His alleged followers ends with their condemnation or, in terms of the parable in Text 18, with the fall of their houses. The interrelation of these two texts demonstrates that the external acts mentioned in Text 17 do not result from Christ's teachings. Thus, these are the foolish men who in Text 18 build their house upon sand.

The parable of the two builders clearly refers to Text 16 as well. The false prophets likewise cannot be ignorant of Christ's teachings as revealed in the Sermon on the Mount. Their acts will reveal the extent of their acceptance of it just as the fruits identify the tree. We may see a difference, however, in the internal acceptance of the Sermon on the Mount by those in Text 17 and by the false prophets in Text 16. In the latter case there is internal, conscious resistance to the message of the Sermon on the Mount, while those in Text 17 may be unconsciously resisting. The point, however, is that none of the interrelated texts in the second part of Chapter 7 clearly distinguish between different types or degrees of internal acceptance of the Sermon on the Mount. All that the texts focus on is the external implementation of Christ's teachings. This latter point is clear in the parable of the two ways and gates in Text 15. Entering one of the gates and walking one of the ways obviously refer to the implementation of a person's philosophy.

Text 15, however, essential to the following three texts, clarifies more explicitly Christ's emphasis on the implementation of His teachings. The way and the gate leading to life (7: 14) are hostile or uninviting, to say the least; they are narrow, hard to find and virtually deserted, since "many" follow the wide gate and the easy way. Thus, Text 15 reiterates that following the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount entails hardship and pain. With this point in mind we can easily understand why in the following three texts the exclusively internal knowledge of Christ's teachings is regarded as virtually irrelevant. It is simply because it is not possible without participation to apprehend intellectually voluntary pain, danger, and deprivation — they must be experienced to be known. The structure of Texts 15 – 18 equates this knowledge with the knowledge of Christ. The unwillingness to accept and experience pain is, as shown in Text 16, the symptom by which the "fruits" of the false prophets can be detected. In Text 17 those who call Christ "Lord, Lord" are condemned for their careful selection of painless, self-asserting acts in His name, and in Text 18, those who do

not expose themselves to pain and the danger of annihilation are surprisingly equated to the "foolish man who built his house upon sand" (7:26). The quantitative detail in Text 15 also supports this reading of these texts: on the wide way and at the wide gate are many who prefer comfort, while at the narrow gate there are only a few, who accept deprivation. Accordingly, we can assume in Text 18 that many build houses on sand, and only a few take the pains to build on rock.

The parable of the two builders, directly related to the Beatitudes in structure, contains two paradigms, the first designating the erection of two houses on different bases and the second representing the resistance of these houses to a storm. The images of this parable are so vivid that we cannot help thinking for a moment that both paradigms refer to the temporal existence of humanity. However, as soon as the parable is linked with the introductory sentences (7:24 and 26) identifying the two builders with those who listen to the Sermon on the Mount and either implement it or not, the parable assumes transcendental dimensions. Thus, the building of houses stands for the relationship of people to the Sermon on the Mount, and the way the houses are built indicates the external manifestations of acceptance or rejection of the sermon. These two components belong to the first paradigm.

The second paradigm, however, if perceived in the context of the Sermon on the Mount, cannot be regarded as representing the temporal security of the house on the rock and the temporal inadequacy of the house on the sand. Such an interpretation would be a colossal misreading of the text, for it would contradict the introductory sentences, relating the types of foundations of the houses to the implementation of the Sermon on the Mount, which emphatically advocates temporal insecurity for its followers. Therefore, if both paradigms were applied to temporal existence, then according to the ideological system of the Sermon on the Mount, those implementing the teachings of the sermon would build their houses on sand, that is, would choose insecurity and persecution, while those refusing to implement Christ's teachings would build on rock, that is, would choose a safe and secure type of existence. In the temporal realm it is infinitely safer to stay away from Christ's teachings than to implement them in practical affairs. The examination of the Beatitudes, it is hoped, has clarified this aspect of the Sermon on the Mount. Thus, the only framework for the second paradigm of

the parable, referring to the resistance to a storm, is the eschatological one, signifying the fullness of time whether universally or personally. In this respect Text 18 is linked to the Beatitudes, for the wise builder with practical sense withstands the eschatological storm in his firm house and enters the kingdom of heaven, while the foolish builder does not. Thus do the two extremities of the Sermon on the Mount, the Beatitudes and Text 18, join.

Text 18 offers Christ's last comment on the poor in spirit, those persecuted for Christ's sake; those who turn their cheek, who give their cloak, who walk the second mile in Text 4 *e*; those who "do not resist one who is evil" (5:39); those who love their enemies and pray for them in Text 4 *f*; those who pray, fast, and give alms secretly in Text 5; those who are not anxious about food and clothing in Text 10; and those who enter the narrow gate and walk the hard and lonely way in Text 15. In empirical terms all these must be labeled insane. Paradoxically at the end of the Sermon on the Mount these lunatics are equated with the person who builds a house on rock. On the other hand, proceeding again from the Beatitudes, those who persecute and revile the righteous and "utter all kinds of evil against" those who follow the principle of the Beatitudes; those who pray, fast, and give alms conspicuously in order to be respected in Text 5; those who serve their master, mammon, in Text 9; those who trample on the words of the Beatitudes and attack those preaching them in Text 13; those who walk on the easy, wide way with the majority and enter through the wide gate in Text 15; those false prophets who do not believe in being defenseless and meek as sheep in Text 16; and those who prefer to prophesy, heal, and work wonders instead of abandoning their security and self-esteem in Text 17 – all these people of common sense and reasonable, practical attitude seeking security, success, and happiness are at the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount equated with the foolish builder.

How can such an inverse system of values obtain? From what viewpoint is it formulated? It can obtain only in the perspective of eternal life in the kingdom of heaven – the only reality and aim of human existence, as well as the only criterion of wisdom according to the Sermon on the Mount.

The structure of the Sermon on the Mount indicates that Christ's main point is the dread of mortality and the possibility of triumphing

over death by living fearlessly in regard to it − in other words, attaining the kingdom of heaven in the temporal, mortal world. This is why in Text 15 (7: 13, 14) the destinations of the ways are "life" and "destruction," leaving the way itself between these two extremes, as introduced by Matthew before the Sermon on the Mount: "... for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned" (4: 16). Those for whom this "light has dawned" are called wise in Text 18 and blessed in the Beatitudes. Thus, these two texts jointly refer to pain and deprivation voluntarily accepted as wisdom and bliss.

The Structure and the Message of Christ's Standard Sermon

1. Christ's Standard Sermon

The question posed at the very beginning of this study of the Sermon on the Mount about the meaning of the text and the exceptional hardship and danger entailed in following its precepts cannot be answered merely by examining its individual parts. The question can be answered only by using the preceding analysis of the individual texts to establish the overall system of signs and their interrelation in the entire discourse. This is the task at hand. Several points, however, concerning the historicity of the Sermon on the Mount as an integrated discourse should be reexamined before discussing the overall structure of the sermon.

In approaching this issue, we cannot avoid the vast body of modern scholarship which regards the Sermon on the Mount as a compilation of Christ's sayings, united by Matthew in the form of a sermon, which actually never took place as one coherent discourse (see Chapter 1, section 2, points 5 and 6). It is widely accepted that the individual sayings in the sermon are loosely connected with each other, that the sermon lacks one basic theme, the indispensible characteristic of any sermon, and that because of their brevity the Chapters 5 − 7 cannot possibly represent a discourse addressed to a crowd from the top of a hill as pictured in the two framing sections of the sermon (5: 1, 2 and 7: 28, 29). The notion of Matthew's compilation of Christ's sayings in the format of a sermon is further allegedly supported by the fact that in Luke's Gospel the parallel text, the Sermon on the Plain (Luke 6: 20 − 49), bears too small a resemblance to the Sermon on the Mount

while repeating verbatim many texts from Matthew's sermon.* Thus, the assumption is that Matthew and Luke used the same early Christian record of Christ's sayings. The hypothesis of Matthew's compilation of the Sermon on the Mount is related to the hypothesis of an early Christian document, commonly referred to as the Q-source, or Q, supposedly a collection of Christ's various sayings used for teaching purposes in the early church. This document was allegedly available to Matthew, as well as to Luke, and from this source they selected the individual texts for both Christ's sermons.

This elementary and certainly inadequate description of the prevailing scholarly approach to the Sermon on the Mount has only one purpose: to establish the background for our assessment of the historicity of the sermon. Its examination in this study seems to indicate that the entire text, although too short for a major sermon of Christ, is a highly structured discourse, in which individual sayings are tightly interrelated according to the main principle of the sermon, namely, the equation between the kingdom of heaven and the repudiation of the anxiety of death in human temporal existence. The close interrelation of individual components in the sermon, moreover, develops this main principle in four consecutive contexts, or syntagmatic units, building in this way a model of humanity and the universe. Because the most important sayings in the sermon are introduced in a sequence that facilitates their understanding, it is safe to assume that the discourse was addressed to one audience, a fact totally denied by the hypothesis of compilation.

The extreme brevity of the sermon is important with respect to its historicity. Its brevity and also its saturation with shocking statements make it almost impossible to follow, at least during the first exposure. These qualities, however, do not necessarily indicate that the text is not a sermon at all, but only a compilation of sayings pronounced on different occasions to various audiences. It is possible to conclude that the version of Christ's sermon, presented by Matthew, is an abridgment, containing only the highlights of the original discourse, leaving out the interrelating illustrations and explanations. We presume Christ's actual sermon was considerably longer and slower in its progression and, therefore, more comprehensible to the crowd on the slopes of the hill.

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* See Martin Dibelius, op. cit., pp. 14 – 16.

If Matthew recorded only the skeleton of the original discourse, the lack of transitions in his rendering becomes understandable. The individual texts in Matthew's abridged version, however, follow a perfectly thought-out sequence in developing the main principle of the sermon apparent from its structure. While abridging the original text considerably, Matthew presumably preserved the sequence of the individual highlights of the discourse.

We must consider the time span between Christ's mission and Matthew's writing of the Gospel. Only one or two generations could have intervened between the time of the delivery of the Sermon on the Mount and Matthew's writing of the abridged version. Such a time span would seem to suggest that unless there was a written record of the sermon, Matthew would have had to rely either on the written Q-source – a collection of Christ's sayings – or on a seemingly unreliable oral tradition. It is possible, however, that Christ's sermon was actually memorized and transmitted to the next generation virtually intact. The memory of the people of Israel, because of their education in Scripture and the methods of teaching applied in their schools, was highly developed, and retained perfectly much longer texts than the Sermon on the Mount, even in its original, unabbreviated form.*

Christ's sermon was probably easy to memorize given the mnemonic features of virtually all the texts preserved in Matthew's version of the Sermon on the Mount. True, it was the tradition of that time to use parallelisms, repetitions, and analogues in religious, as well as ordinary, discourse. However, we need only briefly compare this aspect of the Sermon on the Mount with four other extended discourses of Christ in the same Gospel (Chapters 10, 13, 18, and 24 – 25) to conclude that this sermon was meant for memorization, since there the mnemonic devices are most concentrated. We, of course, recognize the mnemonic power of the parables in their plots. In this respect Chapters 13 and 25 are the best examples; they consist exclusively of parables and explanations of some of them. But Chapter 10, especially its first part (10: 1 – 23), and Chapter 24 obviously were not meant for precise retainment, for mnemonic devices are relatively few.

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* See Henri Daniel-Rops, *Daily Life in the Time of Jesus*, Servant Books, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1980, pp. 110 – 111.

It would seem unlikely that Christ delivered His sermon, which we know as the Sermon on the Mount, only once. Probably this sermon was delivered with some variations on countless occasions, since teaching was Christ's main occupation.* Thus, we may assume that the Sermon on the Mount represents Christ's standard sermon, revealing the kingdom of heaven, as Matthew indicates: "And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom ..." (4: 23) and "... Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom ..." (9: 35). In all probability this was the same discourse that we know in its abridged form as the Sermon on the Mount. It is quite plausible that this is the same sermon Christ had in mind when He spoke to His disciples while sending them on their mission: "And preach as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand' " (10: 7). This phrase apparently served as an index, or reference, to the type of message and, therefore, the type of sermon the disciples were supposed to preach. In all probability they knew it by heart, since they were present many times at Christ's delivery of this sermon. Presumably Christ expected them to know this sermon by heart and sent them to repeat, of course, more than just the phrase by which He referred to it: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand."**

This standard sermon could have been adjusted to different circumstances, to particular audiences, the amount of time available, and so forth. Thus, we can understand why Luke writes a different version: it is the same standard sermon adjusted to another occasion.

In this study the Sermon on the Mount, as rendered in three chapters of Matthew, is regarded as the abbreviated version of Christ's standard sermon — His basic message concerning the kingdom of heaven and His modeling system of the world, repeated with necessary adjustments by His disciples in their mission. It was one and the same audience that listened to the Sermon on the Mount from beginning to end, and for this audience the discourse was adapted. We can find the basic structure of Christ's sermon in its preserved skeleton, and we can deduce its meaning from its structure, apparent in Matthew's version.

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* This assumption was already mentioned by D. A. Carson, *The Sermon on the Mount*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1978, p. 145.

** Ibid., p. 147.

2. The Paradigmatic and the Syntagmatic Structure of the Sermon

We have seen that the Sermon on the Mount contains one model of human existence, traceable throughout, namely, the repudiation of the inherent anxiety of death with all its side-effects: all possible forms of self-assertion and all aspects of the struggle for survival. A total emancipation from this anxiety, as shown in the Beatitudes, constitutes death-free life in the kingdom of heaven. On the other hand, the model of death-free life as presented in the Sermon on the Mount at its beginning, in the Beatitudes, connotes another contrasting model of human existence conditioned by the anxiety of death and, therefore, not death-free, but permeated by death. This double modeling system of the Sermon on the Mount postulates two types of existence with a paradoxical effect: on the one hand, a model of death-free existence in the realm of the temporal world; on the other, a model of human existence, controlled to the point of saturation by death and, therefore, identified with it. Thus, two models stand side by side and contrast with each other; they can perhaps be referred to as death-free and death-subjugated human existence.

Both these models are virtually ignored in the ordinary perception of existence. Human beings hardly realize and certainly do not like to be told that their behavior and all their activities are simply conditioned by the anxiety of death. On the other hand, the average person can hardly imagine that a totally defenseless, self-contracting way of behavior, that is, death-free existence, is possible or even desirable. From the distance between these two basic models of the sermon and the ordinary perception of human existence originates the apparent paradox of the Sermon on the Mount.

Perhaps another way to formulate the same dichotomy of the Sermon on the Mount is to define the two contrasting models of existence as death-inflicting and, therefore, death-subjugated versus death-absorbing but paradoxically death-free. The concept of death-inflicting existence includes, not only aggressive acts, but even acts of seemingly harmless self-assertion, self-affirmation, and generally justified self-defense. The concept of death-absorbing but death-free existence, however, leads to self-contraction, and, therefore, appears dangerous.

These two models of existence are extended in the Sermon on the Mount into the transcendental realm, and this extension introduces the kingdom of heaven, or simply life, versus destruction, as in Text 15 (Two ways, 7: 13, 14). This text is significant for the establishment of the human model, for it represents temporal existence, conveyed by the metaphor of the two types of gates and ways, which are regarded as something between life and destruction and yet different from each other. Thus, Text 15 implicitly introduces through this metaphor the concepts of death-absorbing, or death-free, and death-subjugated, or death-inflicting, existences.

The overall paradox of the Sermon on the Mount is most apparent in the second set of terms above, for the death-inflicting existence, which might seem the most secure and life-promising, according to the Sermon on the Mount, is death-subjugated, leading to transcendental destruction. The death-absorbing existence, which on the temporal plane signifies the most insecure way, prone to destruction, actually stands for death-free and life-permeated existence, or the kingdom of heaven.

It is assumed in this study that the Sermon on the Mount can be interpreted by consistent application of the twofold human model to each individual part of the text. Therefore, the double modeling system of human existence determines, so to speak, the ground rules for interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount and functions as its code. This code comprises a profound paradox in the sermon and dominates its ideology.

The Sermon on the Mount contains two invariants, namely, inverse equity and cognition, both appearing at regular intervals in the text. The invariant of inverse equity is based on the interrelation between the two contrasting models of the death-inflicting and death-absorbing ways leading to their antipodes, or to results opposite to those expected on the mundane plane. The invariant of cognition is generated by the fact that the overall model, or code, of the Sermon on the Mount is entirely alien to the human vision of the world, probably in any culture and at any time. Thus, the perception, or cognition, of the universe which accords with the code of the Sermon on the Mount is of great importance and, therefore, is stressed in the text by this recurring invariant. The two invariants, inverse equity and cognition, are accompanied by the next and, as far as I can see, last pair of invariants,

namely, those of temporal equity and personal participation in fearlessness in regard to death, or good works. The invariants are directly related to the first pair, for temporal equity is the antipode of inverse equity, just as fearlessness in regard to death, or good works represent the other facet of the invariant of cognition. In short, the Sermon on the Mount is a complex communicative system with a code based on the double model of human existence, death-free or death-subjugated. Within this code four invariants function: inverse equity, cognition, temporal equity, and fearlessness in regard to death.

It must be remembered that each of the four invariants rarely occurs in total isolation, and in most of the texts more than one such invariant can be found. However, one of the invariants usually predominates and, therefore, can be regarded as the invariant of the particular text. The mutual inclusiveness of the Sermon on the Mount, crucial for its comprehension, is most emphatically demonstrated in the Beatitudes but is a feature common to all the texts.

A more specific description of each of the four invariants in the shape of the respective paradigms will make the overall structure of the Sermon on the Mount clearer. The invariant of inverse equity, as most evident in the Beatitudes, has already been sufficiently examined. Inverse equity next predominates in Texts 5 and 6 (6: 1 – 18), where it is rendered by the repetition of the pattern: "so that your alms may be secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (6: 4), as well as in the Lord's Prayer, because, as it was shown, it reflects the Beatitudes. The invariant of inverse equity next appears in Text 11 (7: 1, 2), again explicitly expressed in "Judge not, that you be not judged" (7: 1), suggesting that the superiority implied by judgment actually indicates the inferiority of the person judging. The last predominance of inverse equity is found in Text 15 (7: 13, 14), in which it is most emphatically communicated by the metaphor of the narrow gate leading to life. These four occurrences of the invariant of inverse equity form a paradigm, uniting especially the first, the Beatitudes, with the last, Text 15, which is equally universal and radical.

The second invariant, that of cognition, first predominates in Text 2 (5: 13 – 16), in which the metaphor of the "salt of the earth" (5: 13) refers to the awareness of the audience hearing the Beatitudes, while their good works lead those witnessing them to the knowledge of God: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good

works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (5:16). The next instance of the invariant of cognition occurs in Texts 7 and 8 (6:19 – 21 and 22, 23). In the conclusion of Text 7 it is apparent from "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," (6:21), equating putting one's treasures into the kingdom of heaven with love and knowledge of this kingdom, both contained in the human heart, which in biblical language signified the center of all human intellectual, emotional, and spiritual faculties. In Text 8 the invariant is clearly expressed by the function of the eye which can offer two kinds of cognition – that of light or of darkness. The third appearance of this invariant is in Text 12 (7:3 – 5), concerning the attention paid to the speck in the eye of another and the lack of cognizance needed to cure: "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye" (7:5). The fourth occurrence of the invariant is in Text 16 (7:15 – 20), referring to recognition of the disguised false prophets and is summarized in the concluding verse: "Thus you will know them by their fruits" (7:20).

The invariant of temporal equity is introduced in Text 3 (5:17 – 20). The dichotomy between the old law and the new revelation, the full or only partial acceptance of the latter, the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees versus the new righteousness, discloses the inverse equity of the first invariant and the temporal equity that must be superseded. This invariant appears again in the contrast of Text 9 (6:24), summarized as "You cannot serve God and mammon" with the emphasis on mammon, for God is the self-evident master, while mammon represents the quintessence of temporal equity. The next instance of the predominance of this invariant occurs in Text 13 (7:6), where, as was shown, the reason for the dogs' and swine's attack on the advocates of the principle of inverse equity revealed in the Beatitudes is the fear of it and reliance on temporal equity. The fourth, last instance of the invariant of temporal equity is in Text 17 (7:21 – 23), which deals with those who, while confessing the lordship of Christ, perform in His name the self-inflating acts of prophesy, healing, and working miracles. Christ's answer to them, "... depart from me, you evil-doers" (7:23), communicates the contrast between their principle of temporal equity and His of inverse equity.

The last invariant, that of personal participation in fearlessness in regard to death, or good works, first appears in Text 4 (5:21 – 48)

with its six sections (a – f) united by the anaphoric phrases, "You have heard that it was said to the men of old" and "but I say to you," communicating the juxtaposition of the old type of behavior, exemplified by well-chosen quotations, and the new one. The fearlessness or good works within the system of inverse equity are referred to in Text 10 (6: 25 – 34), juxtaposing mammon with "the birds of the air" and "the lilies of the field," and summarizing this text in "But seek first his (God's) kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well" (6: 33). Text 14 (7: 7 – 12), giving to the followers of the Beatitudes and the principle of inverse equity the reassurance of God's responsiveness to their prayers, formulates the fearlessness or good works in the so-called "golden rule": "So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them" (7: 12). The last component of this paradigm is Text 18 (7: 24 – 27), the parable of the two builders distinguished only by doing or not doing the words of the Sermon on the Mount. The doing, the good works, or fearlessness is equated to the foundation of the rock and the absence of good works, caused by an anxiety of death, to that of sand with all its consequences.

As we have seen, the four invariants appear in the structure of the Sermon on the Mount as paradigmatic sequences with their components separated from each other mostly by three texts and present in each of the four contexts of the sermon previously outlined. Thus, the first components of all four paradigms appear in the first context – the universal and traditional; the second components all appear in the second context – that of a religio-economically organized society; the third components appear in the third context – personal relations; and the fourth components are located in the fourth context – that of the practical implementation of the communication found in the Sermon on the Mount. Thus, each of the four invariants is projected onto each of the four contexts, every time achieving a new effect. Furthermore, as Chart 12 (p. 174) summarizes, the four paradigms by their appearance in the horizontal contexts form four distinct syntagms.

Chart 12 shows that the entire Sermon on the Mount is distributed among four paradigms and four syntagms. The first two syntagms, A and B, comprise the first two chapters (5 and 6) of Matthew's text, while syntagms C and D belong to Chapter 7, divided into two almost

Chart 12. The Paradigmatic and Syntagmatic Structure of the Sermon on the Mount

Paradigms ╲ Chapters	Paradigm 1	Paradigm 2	Paradigm 3	Paradigm 4	Syntagmatic contexts
	Inverse equity	Cognition	Temporal equity	Fearlessness in regard to death	
5	Text 1 5:3−12	Text 2 5:13−16	Text 3 5:17−20	Text 4 5:21−48	Syntagm A
	Beatitudes	Salt and light	Old law	But I say to you	Universal and traditional
6	Texts 5,6 6:1−18	Texts 7,8 6:19−23	Text 9 6:24	Text 10 6:25−34	Syntagm B
	Secret righteous-ness; Lord's Prayer	Treasure in heaven; Light of the body	God and mammon	Birds and lilies	Religious and economic
7, first half	Text 11 7:1−2	Text 12 7:3−5	Text 13 7:6	Text 14 7:7−12	Syntagm C
	Judge not	Speck and log	Dogs and swine	Golden rule	Personal and inter-relational
7, second half	Text 15 7:13−14	Text 16 7:15−20	Text 17 7:21−23	Text 18 7:24−27	Syntagm D
	Two ways	False prophets	Lord, Lord	Two builders	Implement-ing

equal parts. Each paradigm develops its invariant in four syntagmatic contexts, and each syntagm presents four paradigmatic invariants in its particular context.

In the entire Sermon on the Mount each of the paradigmatic components contains only one text, except the second components of

paradigms 1 and 2. The second component of paradigm 1 contains Text 5 (Secret righteousness) and Text 6 (Lord's Prayer) which, as we have seen, are blended together by the insertion of Text 6 between Texts 5 *b* (Praying) and 5 *c* (Fasting). Thus the second component of paradigm 2, Texts 7 (Treasures in heaven) and 8 (Light of the body) is the only case in which an exception to the overall system of one text corresponding to one paradigmatic component has to be made. It might be debatable whether the inclusion of Text 7 in paradigm 2 of the invariant of cognition is correct. This text could also be part of paradigm 1, but the invariant of inverse equity seems less apparent than that of cognition. In the concluding verse of this text, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (6: 21), the human heart signifies not only love and devotion as in our language but comprehension and knowledge. Text 7 obviously says that one must love the kingdom of heaven, and therefore put one's treasure there in order to participate in it and therefore know it.

One of the effects of the structure of the Sermon on the Mount is that its individual texts turning into paradigmatic components within syntagmatic contexts acquire a quite different meaning from the one they would have had if they had been taken in isolation or in another context. Two examples may suffice to make this point clear. Christ's proclamation about divorce in Text 4 *c* ("But I say to you," 5: 31, 32) is repeated in Matthew 19: 9 in the context of His answer to the Pharisees. In Chapter 19 Christ's answer has a specific message pertaining exclusively to divorce, although a further conclusion can be derived from it, while in Text 4 the issue of divorce has minor significance, for it is treated within six other examples of self-contraction and repudiation of the anxiety of death, repeatedly emphasized in paradigm 4. While in Chapter 19 divorce is the specific issue, in the Sermon on the Mount it is only an example for a much broader and significant message, that of the principle of the kingdom of heaven. The second example is Christ's warning in Text 4 *b* (Adultery) against self-affirmation and the drastic advice to cut off one's right hand and pluck out one's right eye. In Matthew 18: 8, 9 this advice is reiterated almost verbatim. In this case Christ warns against tempting a child (18: 6), then elaborates on temptation in the world in general, and calls for abstention from it in the hyperbolic image of self-mutilation. The message of this saying in two separate contexts is quite different. While

in Matthew 18: 8, 9 temptation is the central issue, in Text 4 of the Sermon on the Mount the same saying serves as a striking contrast to the acts of self-assertion and self-expansion illustrated by the six examples of Text 4 *a − f* and substituted by self-contraction in the code of the Sermon on the Mount.

The paradigmatic structure, however, bears a much greater significance than the above-mentioned contextual semantics of the individual components would indicate. The paradigms contain their own meaning and therefore augment on the level of the secondary language the communicative force of both their components and the entire text. Thus, from the paradigmatic structure of the Sermon on the Mount it follows that the Beatitudes must be perceived together with the entire paradigm 1 of inverse equity. In other words, the Beatitudes actually are extended by the texts referring to those who act righteously in secret, Text 5, and by those who can genuinely identify themselves with the Lord's Prayer, Text 6, further by those who do not judge, Text 11, as well as by those who enter by the narrow gate and the hard way leading to life, Text 15.

Furthermore, the conclusion of the Beatitudes is paralleled by the conclusion of the paradigm, Text 15, which summarizes all the individual human characteristics of the entire first paradigm. Thus, the whole paradigm is rendered by the narrow gate and the hard way that lead to life. The summarizing function of Text 15, as well as its location at the end of the paradigm, interrelates this text with the concluding ninth beatitude, partakes of its message revelatory of Christ and applies it to the metaphor of the gate and the way. Consequently, life, to which the narrow gate and the hard way lead, signifies the Speaker Himself, and thus equates Christ with life in the conclusion of paradigm 1. The paradigm in its secondary language establishes the notion of human existence equated with the Speaker, Christ, or life.

The message of the secondary language transpires also from the remaining three paradigms. Thus paradigm 2, cognition, extends the message of the Beatitudes and represents the awareness of their universal model. Cognition in this paradigm signifies the perception of God's revelation, as well as His presence in the world, Text 2 (Salt and light); the apprehension of the kingdom of heaven, Text 7 (Treasure in heaven); the awareness of the world's consisting of light and darkness, Text 8 (Light of the body); the knowledge of one's own imperfection,

Text 12 (Speck and log); as well as the ability to recognize the false prophets, Text 16. Thus, paradigm 2 indicates that the universal model of the Beatitudes makes the individual cognizant of the temporal and transcendental realities, oneself, others, and the presence of evil in a community striving for God. The secondary language of the paradigm of cognition conveys a model of cognizance secured by the revelation of the Beatitudes.

Paradigm 3, the invariant of temporal equity, conveys the model of death-permeated existence in two symmetrically-placed realms of human aspirations. The pseudo-religious manifestations of self-assertion and the search for security are located at the extremities of the paradigm — Text 3 (Old law) and Text 17 (Lord, Lord) — while the central two components refer to the worship of mammon, Text 9, and the vehement resentment of the code of the Beatitudes, Text 13 (Dogs and swine). The system of these four texts models the death-permeated human existence in seemingly disconnected instances, totally disregarding their disparity, blending pseudo-righteousness with social prominence and financial success, which within paradigm 3 signify the same.

Paradigm 4 of the invariant of fearlessness in regard to death can easily be read as one uninterrupted text. Such a reading transpires, as we shall see later, from the Sermon on the Plain, Luke 6: 20 – 49. Paradigm 4 conveys the meaning and the value of fearless self-contraction. The good deeds are accompanied by prayers to God. The paradigm ends with the parable of the two builders, Text 18, which also serves not only as the conclusion of syntagm D and the entire sermon, but also of paradigm 4.

Thus a paradigm is capable of disclosing its own secondary modeling system, which finds its best expression, not in a descriptive narrative such as the present study, but in the original text itself. The work of the critic should be restricted to demonstrating the structure of the text in order to facilitate the reader's perception of the secondary modeling system. The structure of the Sermon on the Mount offers a great number of individual perceptions according to the needs, the perspicacity, and the persistence of individual readers, sufficiently motivated to comprehend the secondary language.

The paradigmatic invariants and syntagmatic contexts of the Sermoṅ on the Mount are of exceptional communicative force and are two of the essentials for establishing the meaning of each individual

text, for they link all components of the discourse. There are, however, additional, minor links between individual texts, which also contribute to the overall structure of the sermon.

3. Secondary Interrelations in the Sermon

We can observe in Chart 12 a definite boundary between the second and third paradigms. The interrelations within each half of any syntagm are relatively stronger than the relationship between the two halves. Thus, a stronger link can be observed between the first and second components, as well as between the third and fourth components, than between the second and third components of any given syntagm. These linkages, traceable through all four syntagms, contribute to the structural unity of the entire sermon. Furthermore, the interrelation of paradigms 1 and 2, and 3 and 4 results in the presence of two invariants in the components of the second and fourth paradigms. The continuation of the invariant from the preceding syntagmatic component, the first or the third, and the addition of a new invariant, predominating in the second and fourth syntagmatic components, creates their thematic complexity. The syntagm A serves as a good example. Text 2 (Salt and light), the second syntagmatic component, continues from the first component the invariant of inverse equity, which in the Beatitudes is partially expressed by the anaphora "Blessed are ..." and is communicated in the second component by "You are the salt of the earth" (5:13) and "You are the light of the world" (5:14). However, these two metaphors are further transformed, one directly and one obliquely, into a metaphor that participates in the invariant of cognition: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works ..." (5:16). Not being a continuation of the preceding component, the invariant of cognition dominates Text 2. The fourth component in the syntagm A, Text 4 ("But I say to you"), carries on from the third component, Text 3 (Old law), the invariant of temporal equity, which is communicated in the conclusion: "... unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (5:20). This invariant can easily be detected in the anaphoras of the fourth syntagmatic component, Text 4, "You have heard that it was said to the men

of old . . ." (5: 21), which could be regarded as the references to temporal equity, since such maxims as "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" (5: 38) or "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy" (5: 43) are purposely selected to exemplify temporal equity. The new invariant, however, characteristic exclusively of the fourth paradigm, is the examples of fearlessness, which are in full accord with the invariant of inverse equity: "But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (5: 44). These exhortations contribute to the fourth component only and therefore represent its predominant invariant of fearlessness. This type is distribution of invariants, characteristic of the entire sermon, can be traced in each of the four syntagms.

Chart 12 demonstrates the tight structure of the four-step, gradual progression of the code, the paradoxical model of death-free and death-subjugated human existence established in the first component of the first paradigm, the Beatitudes, which in the syntagm D focuses on the implementation of this model. This self-focusing feature of the end of the Sermon on the Mount makes its structure circular. While the Beatitudes, as well as the entire syntagm A, relate in the most fundamental context of the universal characteristics of human beings and their religious tradition, the syntagm D relates in the context of those who at this time have already accepted the ideology of the Sermon on the Mount and intend to implement it. While in the syntagm A, especially Text 2 (Salt and light), the Speaker addresses those who have received the revelation of the Beatitudes, the syntagm D refers to those who have received the message of the entire sermon, particularly Text 18 (Two builders): "Every one then who hears these words of mine and does them . . ." (7: 24). This circularity of the structure on the horizontal, or syntagmatic, axis of the sermon is paralleled by a circular structure on the vertical, or paradigmatic, axis. There is a definite link between the last component of each syntagm with the first component of the following syntagm. The last component of syntagm A is related to the first component of syntagm B, while its last component is related to the first component of syntagm C, and so on. These interrelations, however, do not link these components too closely, for each of the syntagms introduces a new context and therefore projects its content onto a new background. Nevertheless, we can easily trace a certain continuity between Texts 4 (But I say to you) and 5 (Secret righteous-

ness) — the last component of syntagm A and the first component of syntagm B — because both texts relate to some of the aspects of the established religious tradition, the first to the Scripture and oral tradition, the second to current religious practice. The same can be detected between Texts 10 (Birds and lilies) and 11 (Judge not), the former being the last component of syntagm B and the latter, the first component of syntagm C. Text 10 deals with the extension of a person's field of action, expressed in the material area of food and clothing, while Text 11 deals also with self-extension in a different context, not in the realm of economics, but in the realm of human relations. Finally, Text 14 (Golden rule) relates directly to the image of the narrow gate and the narrow way, linking the last component of syntagm C with the first component of syntagm D, Text 15 (Two ways). Thus, the entire Sermon on the Mount, while composed of seemingly isolated sections, or texts, is bound together by several lines of interrelations, extending in various directions and on various levels testifying to the congruity and homogeneity of the whole discourse.

The most important role of the structure of the sermon, however, its communicative function, is found in Text 1, the Beatitudes, the first component of both the first paradigm and syntagm A. The Beatitudes, being the most comprehensive formulation of the ideology of the sermon with their poetic structure and binary modeling system of the universe, represent a verbal icon of the heavenly kingdom, or kingdom of God. This verbal icon is systematically expanded in four consecutive steps, or paradigms, and in four consecutive syntagmatic contexts, each time newly introduced by the first component of each syntagm, Text 1 (Beatitudes), Text 5 (Secret righteousness), Text 11 (Judge not), and Text 15 (Two ways). In each of these four texts the heavenly kingdom and its death-free life, or simply life, as Text 15 refers to it, is projected onto a new syntagmatic context. Thus, the audience is taught how to recognize the kingdom of heaven in four different, but fundamental, situations.

4. The Metadiscursive Texts of Syntagm D

Chart 12 might also facilitate a closer examination of syntagm D and its relation to the entire preceding text. We cannot miss the fact that

syntagm D contains allusions or communications found in all the other syntagms. True, all four components of syntagm D are united by their common context − the implementation of the revelation of the preceding discourse − but in this syntagm each component additionally represents one of the four contexts. The first component, Text 15 (Two ways), relates to inverse equity in the context of its implementation in the most universal images of the narrow gate and the hard way paralleling the Beatitudes. The second component of syntagm D, Text 16 (False prophets), far more specific in terms of its context, projects its invariant of cognition onto a religious community with a certain hierarchy of individual members, leaders, or prophets, real or false. Since false prophets should be detected by the community, the invariant of cognition and the additional context of the religious community are both present and interact within the context of syntagm D, that is, the implementation of the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount. The following, third component, Text 17 (Lord, Lord), also contains a secondary feature added to the context of syntagm D. This feature, or secondary context − the individual's relationship to other members of the community and to Christ − is indicated by the privileged position of the defendants and Christ's concluding response: "I never knew you ..." (7: 23). The last component of syntagm D, Text 18 (Two builders), as we have seen, serves as a summary of the entire Sermon on the Mount, as well as of syntagm D, and reflects most specifically its particular context of the implementation of the entire revelation clearly indicated in the introductory sentences: "Every one then who hears these words of mine and does them ..." (7: 24) and "every one who hears these words of mine and does not do them ..." (7: 26).

The order in which the secondary contexts appear in the individual components of the last syntagm D is most revealing for the present examination, for this order reflects that of the contexts of the individual syntagms previously traced throughout the entire discourse. We have seen that syntagm A concerns issues in the universal context, that of basic human character and the religious, cultural tradition, and, as we can now see, the imagery of the first component in syntagm D, Text 15 (Two ways), is consistent also with this context. Syntagm B, the social context in its religious and economic expression, is reflected in the secondary context of Text 16 (False prophets). Syntagm C, personal relationships, is coherent with the secondary context reflected in the

setting of the Last Judgment in Text 17 (Lord, Lord). The last compo-
nent, Text 18 (Two builders), corresponds in all respects to syntagm
D itself.

This short survey of the coherence of the individual components of
syntagm D with the respective contexts of syntagms A – D demonstrates
once more the basic feature in the entire Sermon on the Mount, namely,
its mutual inclusiveness, with many qualities overlapping in each part of
the text without obscuring the predominant feature of each individual
passage.

This coherence surfaces, especially when the components of syn-
tagm D are compared with those of paradigm 1. The first component
of syntagm D, Text 15 (Two ways), stressing the difficulty of the
narrow way, parallels the first beatitude, "Blessed are the poor in
spirit" (5: 3), as well as the last beatitude with its explanatory alteration,
". . . for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you" (5: 12).
Text 16 (False prophets) represents the context of a community that
may offer an opportunity for false leadership: "Beware of false
prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are
ravenous wolves" (7: 15). This warning reiterates more generally the
one in Text 5 (Secret righteousness), the first component of syntagm
B, not to imitate the hypocrisy of those who seek respect and promi-
nence by conspicuous charity, prayer, and fasting (6: 2,5,16). The third
component of syntagm D, Text 17 (Lord, Lord) recalls the first compo-
nent of syntagm C, Text 11 (Judge not) in the individual's relationship
to Christ, demonstrated in the setting of the Last Judgment, which is
reminiscent of the conclusion of Text 11: "For with the judgment you
pronounce you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the
measure you get" (7: 2). In addition, the judging of a neighbor, as an
act of assumed superiority, is paralleled with the positions of superiority
of those who heal, prophesy, and work wonders in Christ's name, but
whom Christ refuses to recognize (7: 23). The last component of syn-
tagm D, Text 18 (Two builders), is the closest in imagery to the first
component, Text 15 (Two ways). Each of these correlations alone
would not signify any specific structural feature in the text; in their
entirety, however, and with the particular order in which the syntagma-
tic contexts appear, they expose one of many definite structural, and
therefore, meaningful details of the overall system of the Sermon on
the Mount.

The reader is, of course, aware that this structural pattern was already established in the first part of the sermon, in the Beatitudes (see Chart 6). The common feature of the structures of the Beatitudes and the sermon is the summarizing function of the last section of each text – the ninth beatitude and syntagm D. This similarity is established by the one-to-one correlation between the components of the ninth beatitude and syntagm D, and the individual sections of the respective texts – the six central beatitudes and the syntagms A – D – with the exceptional function of Text 18, which refers to its own syntagm D. Chart 13 (p. 184) shows the coherence of these two structures.

The correlation of the ninth beatitude and syntagm D with their respective, preceding texts is not the only similarity between the two summarizing texts. The reference to the Speaker appears in both texts. This reference occurs nine times in Text 17:

> Not every one who says to me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?" And then will I declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from me, you evil-doers." (7: 21 – 23)

In Text 18 the Speaker is referred to once in a positive setting ("Every one then who hears these words of mine and does them," 7: 24) and once in a negative one ("And every one who hears these words of mine and does not do them," 7: 26). The reference to the Speaker in Texts 17 and 18 is augmented by the direct reference to God in Text 17 ("but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven," 7: 21) and by the universal, eschatological setting ("On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord,' " 7: 22). Thus syntagm D, as a whole, because of its last two components, revelatory of Christ, Texts 17 and 18, continues and specifies the basic notions of the ninth beatitude.

The identical function of the ninth beatitude and Texts 17 and 18 goes even further. In Text 17 a threefold system is established with the first element representing Christ personally ("Not every one who says to me, 'Lord, Lord' "), the second element, the principle of the kingdom of heaven ("shall enter the kingdom of heaven"), and the third element, the will of God ("but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven," 7: 21). In the following verse the second element, the principle of the kingdom of heaven, is outlined from the viewpoint of those who

Chart 13. The Structure of the Beatitudes and of the Sermon on the Mount

PARADIGMS:	1.	2.	3.	4.	SYNTAGMATIC CONTEXTS:
The Beatitudes, Text 1					
1. the poor in spirit					
pair 1 2. the mourning / 3. the weak					
pair 2 4. those hungry for righteousness / 5. the merciful					
pair 3 6. the pure in heart / 7. the peacemakers					
8. the persecuted					
9. the reviled, the persecuted, the slandered,	Text 2	Text 3	Text 4		Syntagm A Universal and traditional
	Text 5, 6	Text 7, 8	Text 9	Text 10	Syntagm B Religious and economic
	Text 11	Text 12	Text 13	Text 14	Syntagm C Personal and interrelational
	Text 15	Text 16	Text 17	Text 18	Syntagm D Implementing

are facing the Last Judgment: "On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' " 7: 22). The three-part enumeration in this verse is analogous to the first verse in the ninth beatitude: "Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account" (5: 11). Society's three retaliatory reactions are paralleled by the defendants' three self-assertive acts in Text 17, and the phrase in the ninth beatitude, "on my account" parallels the phrase of the defendants, "in your name." As in the ninth beatitude, where the phrase "on my account" refers to the revelation of the Beatitudes, so in Text 17 the phrase "in your name" signifies to the Speaker, but not to the defendants, the will of the Father who is in heaven (7: 21). In Text 17 the will of the Father is equated to the principle of the kingdom of heaven, that is, the repudiation of the anxiety of death accompanied by self-contraction. From the dialogue it is clear that the defendants do not comprehend this principle and contradict the will of God by their self-assertive acts, ironically performed in the name of Christ. The concluding verse of Text 17 defines Christ's understanding of the phrase "in your name" used by the defendants: "And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you evil-doers'" (7: 23). This response establishes the threefold system of the first verse, this time negatively: Christ (I never knew you); the kingdom of heaven (depart from me); and the will of God, this time in its violation (you evil-doers).

Christ's response contrasts with the defendants' claim in respect to their identification with Him. They claim their accord with Him by two factors: by their worship ("Lord, Lord") and by their deeds performed in His name. Christ, however, in His response ignores their worship and condemns them by calling them "evil-doers," indicating that their acts represent, not self-contraction, but self-extension and therefore are death-permeated, contrary to the will of God. Thus, the defendants' phrase "in your name," repeated three times, in Christ's perception amounts to "in the name of your teaching" or "according to your teaching," or "in agreement with the will of God"; according to this understanding Christ repudiates the defendants. Thus, for the defendants the phrase "in your name" means worshipping the person of Christ, while for Christ the same phrase can stand only for imple-

menting His principle of death-free life of the kingdom of heaven. This difference in language explains the apparent lack of communication between the defendants and Christ in Text 17.

The dialogue between the Speaker and the defendants in Text 17 progresses in two codes; the defendants speak in the code of the temporal world, claiming that they have achieved remarkable successes in Christ's name and probably to the practical benefit of His followers, while Christ replies in the code of the kingdom of heaven, of self-identification with His teachings, His principle of repudiation of the anxiety of death, seeking no practical success. In this code He denies that the enumerated deeds were performed in His name, because He is His teachings, that is, His principle of death-free life. In other words, the defendants' acts were not performed in Christ's name, for they contrast with His teaching.

Christ's response establishes the equation between Him and His teaching, between Christ historical and the eternal principle of the kingdom of heaven, as it was established at the end of the Beatitudes. This time, however, at the end of the entire Sermon on the Mount, the equation of the Speaker with His teachings is conveyed in the setting of universal eschatology ("On that day" — 7:22), and instead of the joy of the ninth beatitude the audience is seriously warned against substituting the Speaker for His teachings. This warning is further emphasized in the parable of the two builders, Text 18. Both builders listen to the Speaker's teachings, but one of them identifies Christ with His teachings and therefore implements them, while the other separates Him from His teachings and does not implement them. These comments of the Speaker on His teachings and on Himself and the equation of Himself with His teachings constitute His metadiscourse, the most significant link between the ninth beatitude and the two texts closing the entire sermon.

The strategic positions of the two metadiscourses (the ninth beatitude and syntagm D with its Texts 17, 18) assign them the function of summarizing and modeling the entire preceding discourse by the reiteration of the six central beatitudes and syntagms A – D in identical order. Thus, in the concluding sections (the ninth beatitude and syntagm D) the entire, preceding, respective texts are summarized and identified with the Speaker. Both concluding sections are meant to be revelatory of Christ in their function and content, for they identify the Beatitudes and the

entire sermon with Christ and establish an equation between Him and His message, the kingdom of heaven. Thus, syntagm D, with its two closing texts, can be regarded as a variant of the ninth and, as we will see, the eight beatitudes, for they share essential functions: they summarize the previous discourse; they contain metadiscursive references to the Speaker; and they identify the Speaker with His discourse.

These two metadiscursive passages, equated with each other, as we have seen, model the respective, preceding texts. The equality of the two passages and their equation to two others, the six central beatitudes and the syntagms A — D, result in the equation of the two latter ones. Thus, the Beatitudes are equated to the remainder of the Sermon on the Mount. This interrelation of the two parts of the discourse demands, however, closer examination.

5. The Modes and Tonalities of the Sermon

We recall that the first beatitude serves as the introduction to the following six beatitudes (see Chart 3), while the Beatitudes, Text 1, serve as the introduction to the rest of the Sermon on the Mount. Furthermore, we must remember the second introduction in the Beatitudes, the eighth beatitude, which shares with the first introduction, the first beatitude, the clause "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (5: 3,10) and is also linked to the following metadiscursive, ninth beatitude by the notion of persecution (see Chart 3). This second introduction in the Beatitudes has its counterpart in the concluding syntagm D: the first two Texts 15 (Two ways) and 16 (False prophets), which anticipate the final metadiscursive Texts 17 (Lord, Lord) and 18 (Two builders), because of their very location in the same syntagm D, in the context of the implementation of the revelation of the Sermon on the Mount. Thus, in both the Beatitudes and the remainder of the sermon is summarized in Chart 14 (p. 188).
identical to each other in function, communication, and location. This mutual reflection of the structure of the Beatitudes and the entire sermon is summarized in the following chart:

Chart 14 shows the progression of the sermon whose sections correspond from left to right in both its main texts, that is, the Beatitudes and the entire Sermon on the Mount.

Chart 14. The Homology of the Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount

	Introductions	Main Sections	Concluding Metadiscourses
The Beatitudes	*The first beatitude:* Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. *The eighth beatitude:* Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.	*Six central beatitudes, 2 – 7*	*The ninth beatitude:* Blessed are you when mean revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.
The Sermon on the Mount	*The Beatitudes* *The first half of Syntagm D, Texts 15 – 16:* Enter by the narrow gate; ... For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few (7: 13, 14). Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves (7: 15).	*Syntagms A – C Texts 2 – 14*	*The second half of Syntagm D, Texts 17, 18:* Not every one who says to me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven (7: 21). Every one then who hears these words of mine and does them ... (7: 24). And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them ... (7: 26).

The two charts, 13 and 14, demonstrate the structural identity of the two texts, their equation as intended by the Speaker, which communicates by structural means that one text is the model of the other, that both serve as vehicles for the same communication and conclude it with the summarizing metadiscursive passage, in which the Speaker is identified with His discourse.

The main implication of the homology of the Beatitudes and the entire sermon is the extension of the anaphoras "Blessed are . . ., for . . ." in the Beatitudes to all the positive human characteristics, present in virtually every text of the sermon. This extension is clearly felt in Text 2 (5: 13 – 16), for its close link to the Beatitudes implies that those who are "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" are also blessed, "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." This extension is further expressed in the concluding verse of Text 3: "For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (5: 20). This verse, given the homology of the two texts, connotes that those whose "righteousness exceeds . . ." are blessed. The smooth extension of the anaphora of the Beatitudes to Texts 2 and 3 only reinforces the significance of the homology and assists further such extension troughout the remainder of the sermon. Thus, blessed are those who make peace (Text 4 *a*); who do not lust after women (Text 4 *b*); who do not divorce (Text 4 *c*); who do not swear at all (Text 4 *d*); who do not resist evil, who turn their other cheek, offer their cloak, walk the second mile (Text 4 *e*); and who love their enemies (Text 4 *f*). Human self-contraction depicted in these texts signifies bliss in the universal and traditional context.

Text 5, introducing syntagm B, again continues the bliss of the Beatitudes. Thus, the listener and the reader are assured that those who exercise their righteousness in secret are blessed, for their "Father who sees in secret will reward" them (6: 4). The close interrelation of Text 6, containing the Lord's Prayer, with the Beatitudes simply indicates that this is the prayer of those who are "blessed" and who "forgive men their trespasses," for then their "heavenly Father also will forgive" them (6: 14). Blessedness in the present is clearly assured to those who have their treasures in heaven (Text 7), whose "eye is sound" and whose body is "full of light" (Text 8), who serve, not mammon, but God (Text 9), and who are not "anxious about tomor-

row" (Text 10). Their attitude towards the established religious and economic practice constitutes their bliss.

In syntagm C the first component again recalls the inverse equity of the Beatitudes and thus establishes the anaphora of bliss in Text 11, where those who do not judge, that is who forgive, are blessed, for they will not be judged but forgiven. Those who take the log from their eye are blessed in Text 12, just as are those who overcome the despair resulting from Text 13, "for every one who asks receives ..." (7: 8) in Text 14. Thus here the bliss is established in the context of personal relationships.

Syntagm D begins with the model of the Beatitudes in Text 15, saying simply that those who enter through the narrow gate are blessed, for it "leads to life" (7: 14), that is, to the kingdom of heaven. Blessed also are those who recognize and, therefore, do not follow the false prophets (Text 16), who relate to Christ, not only verbally, but in self-contraction (Text 17), who hear and live the words of Christ as do the wise who build their houses on rock, for they will survive the storm of the Last Judgment in Text 18. In the last syntagmatic context the bliss applies to those who implement the entire teachings of Christ.

This survey of the remainder of the sermon in relation to the introductory anaphora of blessedness in the Beatitudes demonstrates, perhaps impressionistically, its lasting effect. However, this anaphora not only contributes an emotional effect to the sermon, but essentially changes the character of the individual texts. In isolation from the Beatitudes the greatest part of the sermon could be perceived in an imperative, regulatory, or legal modality, but the resounding of the blessedness in the present transforms the sermon into a revelation of the kingdom of heaven, which is close, which is "at hand" (4: 17). The position of the Beatitudes, introducing the sermon, and the homology of the two texts, which establishes their mutual reflection, suggests that the mode of revelation in the first text continues in the following one and that the following text is already contained in the preceding one. Thus, the structure of the entire Sermon on the Mount first introduces the revelation concerning the universe in the Beatitudes, elaborates on this revelation in four syntagmatic contexts, and adds an exhortation to implement it in personal existence.

On the other hand, however, the homology of the Beatitudes and the entire sermon produces a reverse effect. The imperative mode in

the remainder of the sermon joins the mode of revelation in the Beatitudes and in retrospect affects them with the connoted imperative to become, or to be. This mode can be deduced most clearly from two texts: Text 3 (Old law) "... unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees ..." (5:20), which actually signifies an exhortation to be, or become, more righteous, and Text 16 (False prophets) with its metaphor of good and bad trees, which cannot bear other kinds of fruit than their natures allow (7:17,18). In terms of this image a person must begin to bear good fruit in order to become a good tree. Thus, the remainder of the sermon contains the image of its imperative mode which projects itself back onto the Beatitudes because of the homology of the two texts, and suggests an exhortation to become, and be, poor in spirit, meek and mourning, hungry and thirsty for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, capable and willing to undergo persecution for righteousness' sake, and to accept with firmness revilement, persecution, and slander for Christ's sake, or on Christ's account, which means, as we have seen, for His teachings. Thus, the two basic modes in the Sermon on the Mount, that of revelation in the Beatitudes and that of the exhortation in the remainder of the sermon, blend in a mode of exhortative revelation. It is the revelation of the binary model in the Beatitudes, the reign of the anxiety of death over human existence, contrasted with the emancipation from this anxiety equated to the kingdom of heaven, which must be realized in the present.

The entire sermon further elaborates on the same modeling system in four syntagmatic contexts and with practical guidance within four paradigms in regard to self-liberation from the anxiety of death and, therefore, entrance into the kingdom of heaven. These two discursive axes applied to the binary model of the Sermon on the Mount shape its mode into one of exhortative revelation. Both parts of this mode are most obvious in the metadiscursive passages, which summarize in an identical way both the Beatitudes and the remainder of the Sermon on the Mount and establish their homology.

At this stage of the investigation we can examine the overall tonality of the Sermon on the Mount. Two basic tonalities parallel the modes traced above in the two texts. The revelation of the Beatitudes is exceedingly joyful in tone, while the remainder of the sermon contains only a few passages of the same radiance. The best example in this

respect is the first part of Text 10 with the idyllic reference to the lilies of the field and the birds of the air (6: 26 – 29). This tonality, however, as we have seen, sobers in the following verse, which refers to "the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven" (6: 30). Besides this passage the tonality of the sermon after Text 2 (Salt and light), which is still as joyful as the Beatitudes, grows more and more sinister, culminating in paradigm 3 and syntagm D. The four texts of this syntagm, each containing a binary opposition, in one way or another stress the negative alternative. In Text 15 the many choose the gate and the way leading to destruction; in Text 16 there is the warning against the false prophets; in Text 17 the subjects are those who will be condemned for their iniquity; and in Text 18 the fall of the builder's house is emphasized by the closing phrase "and great was the fall of it" (7: 27). The two tonalities would contrast if the homology of both parts of the Sermon on the Mount did not impose on it the joyful formula "Blessed are ..." from the Beatitudes. Nevertheless, the contrasting tonalities are real and significant.

We saw during the examination of the Beatitudes that this text with its formal structure of left and right parts, or paradigms, contains also a third paradigm, which is only connoted in the left part of the text by its invariant, emancipation from the anxiety of death. The combination of this invariant with the anaphora, the discriminatory "Blessed are ...", reveals that this emancipation is a great achievement and that significant resistance may hinder liberation from the anxiety of death. This resistance results from the status quo of human temporal existence. It is only inferred, however, in the Beatitudes and, therefore, does not disturb the dominating tonality of the joy of the kingdom of heaven.

The binary model of human existence in relation to the rule of death, however, is presented differently in the remainder of the sermon. The status quo of temporal existence becomes the basis of the discourse. Its revelation is focused on the present state of existence under the reign of death with all its implications. This revelation generates the sinister tonality of the remainder of the sermon, which peaks in syntagm D, just as the joyful tonality in the Beatitudes peaks in the last verses, the ninth beatitude. Thus, the metadiscursive passages function identically in this respect as well. Both bring the prevailing tonality of the respective texts to its most powerful expression in the passages

revelatory of Christ and relate the Speaker's role to the pertinent realm of human existence – in the Beatitudes to life in the kingdom of heaven and in the remainder of the sermon, to existence under the tyranny of the anxiety of death.

It must be stressed at this point that such a system of interrelated metadiscursive texts, alternating modes and tonalities within a communication can hardly be traced to any source except the author's own infinite supply of images and notions and definitive comprehension of the message to be conveyed. It is only the author who can produce such communicative force by extraordinary structural complexity. In the context of Matthew's Gospel it is Christ who has constructed and pronounced His Sermon on the Mount (see Chapter I, Section 4).

The structure of Christ's standard sermon as preserved in Matthew can be also traced in Luke's Sermon on the Plain as well as partially in Christ's Parable of the Sower (see Appendixes 1 and 2). Thus the structure of the Sermon on the Mount might well be a recurring structure in Christ's teaching.

6. Revelation and Eschatology in the Sermon

No matter how well established and defined, the structure of a text yields only academic satisfaction and does not offer a definite reward unless the impact of the structure on the message of the text is found. A considerable contribution to our understanding of the message of the Sermon on the Mount was already achieved by the establishment of its code, its paradigmatic and syntagmatic structures, the metadiscursive passages, and their interrelation. However, the established homology of the two basic parts of the text, that is, of the Beatitudes and the entire sermon, may prove to be more pertinent to the content and the message of the text than might be evident initially.

The differences between the two homologous parts of the Sermon on the Mount are most revealing. However, because the differences are considerably more numerous than the similarities, they are more difficult to examine. In the selection of the most relevant differences a certain arbitrariness is inevitable. Two differences remain to be examined: the differences in the explanations and the differences in eschatology, while major differences between the two texts as, for example,

the syntagmatic and paradigmatic systems, the presence of four invari-
ants, and the four syntagmatic contexts, have already been discussed.

The first difference to be examined now is the distribution of the
explanatory passages. The Beatitudes contain ten times the conjunction
for, which belongs to their right part and introduces the explanation
for the left part — the entrance of those who are blessed into the
kingdom of heaven. This type of eschatological explanation appears
rather seldom in the remainder of the sermon. There, of thirty-four
explanatory passages, only ten can without hesitation be regarded as
explanations of an eschatological nature referring to the kingdom of
heaven. These ten are found in Text 4 *a* (But I say to you — anger),
Text 4 *b* (Adultery), Text 5 (Secret righteousness), Text 6 (Lord's
Prayer), Text 11 (Judge not), Text 15 (Two gates), and in Text 18 (Two
builders). It is noteworthy that all the components of the first paradigm
of inverse equity, Texts 1, 5, 6, 11, and 15, contain this type of
explanation. On the other hand, there are at least sixteen explanations
referring to temporal existence. Since this type of explanation differs
most explicitly from those in the Beatitudes, it deserves special atten-
tion.

The explanatory passages of most of the texts of the Sermon on
the Mount have been particularly useful in tracing the code, the
emancipation from the dread of annihilation and death, as well as the
invariants of the four paradigms. These passages refer not so much to
the will of God or the nature of the kingdom of heaven, but are rather
deductive. This type of explanation results in the general impression
that the Speaker's aim is to convince the audience that the basic
principles of His discourse are to be understood rather than accepted
as authoritative imperatives. Thus, the modality of revelation rather
than the modality of precept is further emphasized.

The best examples of explanatory passages aiming at a clear under-
standing of the maxims can be found in the last two paradigms, those
of temporal equity and good works or fearlessness. Text 4 *f* (But I say
to you — Love for enemies) contains a clear example of such an
explanation: "For if you love those who love you, what reward have
you? Do not even tax collectors do the same? And if you salute only
your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the
Gentiles do the same?" (5: 46, 47). This deductive explanation jux-
taposes two fundamental realms of existence, a binary opposition

already apparent in the Beatitudes — death-subjugated and death-free existence — and reveals to those capable of apprehending the code of the discourse, the principle of the secondary modeling system of the text. Thus, it is not the authority of God, Scripture, or the Speaker, Christ, but clearly the basic principle, the basic character of human essence, that is referred to as the reason and purpose for one of the most radical maxims: "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (KJV, 5:44).

The general tendency to offer an explanation rather than an imperative in the Sermon on the Mount is further illustrated in this same text, 4*f*. The quoted explanatory passage about the tax collectors and Gentiles (5:46, 47) is framed by two passages referring to God, not as the highest authority, but rather as the highest aspiration of humanity. The first passage is twofold: "so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven," followed by an explanation for this relationship to God pointing to His nature, which projects the maxim of love for enemies onto God and His works: "for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust" (5:45). The second passage constitutes the maximal conclusion of Text 4*f* and Chapter 5 with a repeated reference to God, this time again, not in terms of an imperative or reminder of God's authority, but rather as an indication of the supreme model of life that God represents: "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (5:48). The imperative in this verse is not so much an order as a proclamation of the contrast between the self-asserting, defensive existence of the tax collectors and Gentiles, on the one hand, and the self-contracting, defenseless existence of those who love their enemies and therefore reflect the life-assuring model of God, on the other. Thus, the structure of Text 4*f* clearly indicates its mode of revelation. After the presentation of the maxim of love for enemies (5:44), its aim, the relationship to God, is disclosed, followed by the explanation of this relationship by the reference to God's works (5:45), then they are contrasted with the behavior of the tax collectors and Gentiles (5:46, 47). The audience is left with an option — either defensive and death-subjugated existence or defenseless and death-free existence. Finally, the latter existence is equated with the perfection of God (5:48). The sequence of these passages and the shifts from one aspect of the same subject to the other clearly indicate that the

Speaker has no other intention than to reveal and explain that there are two types of existence — the death-subjugated and the death-free — and the latter is congruent with God.

Other examples of deductive explanations occur throughout the sermon. In Text 3 (Old law) the evaluation of righteousness is offered in concrete terms connoting the same contrast as in Text 4 *f*, but this time related, not to the model of God's works, but to the Beatitudes: "Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (5: 19, 20). The kingdom of heaven is the assumed aspiration of the audience. The juxtaposition of the two options that we have seen in Text 4 *f* is represented in Text 3 by total or only partial fulfillment of the Beatitudes by means of relaxation of some of their modeling components (5: 19). Again, only one aim of the Speaker can be traced in this text, that is, the disclosure of the modeling system within the discourse.

In Text 9 (God an mammon) the incompatibility of the two masters, God an mammon, is explained in most concrete terms: "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other" (6: 24). In Text 10 *e* (Tomorrow) the explanation is twofold. First, the reference to the Gentiles (6: 32) connotes that anxiety about wealth does not accord with the model of God; the second concludes: "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Let the day's own trouble be sufficient for the day" (6: 34). Text 13 (Dogs and swine) explains most realistically the deadly danger that might result from disclosing the code and the message of the Beatitudes, the supremacy of self-emancipation from the anxiety of death, to those who worship its power and authority: ". . . lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you" (KJV, 7: 6). Text 14 (Golden rule) refers to parental benevolence (7: 9 – 11) in order to explain and assure God's responsiveness, which represents in a way an inverse system to that in Text 4 *f*, where God's benevolence becomes the reason to love one's enemies. Text 16 (False prophets) illustrates and explains the impossibility of faking emancipation from the anxiety of death by identifying the essence, or the nature, of a being and its external manifestations

(7: 16 – 18). And, finally, Text 17 (Lord, Lord) explains the nonaccept-ance of verbal worship and self-assertive acts, even performed in Christ's name, by the term "iniquity," which in this context signifies devotion to the rules of death-permeated existence: "And then will I profess unto them, 'I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity!' " (KJV, 7: 23). After having been exposed to virtually the entire sermon, the audi-ence should have been able to deduce the characteristic of those in ques-tion and the invariant of their acts.

The distribution of the deductive explanations follows the paradig-matic structure of the Sermon on the Mount. They are most explicitly expressed and most of them are located in the two last components of each syntagm, except syntagm D, where they are shifted one space to the left, for the last component, Text 18 (Two builders), is in a sense, separated from the others by its special concluding function. If we accept, in regard to the explanatory passages in the Sermon on the Mount, the term *eschatological* for those referring exclusively to the kingdom of heaven and *deductive* for those appealing to human reason, then the general scheme of the distribution of these two types of explanations can be outlined as follows:

Chart 15. The Distribution of Eschatological and Deductive Explanations

Eschatological Explanations	Deductive Explanations				
Paradigm 1	Paradigm 2		Paradigm 3	Paradigm 4	
Text 1			Text 3	Text 4 f	Syntagm A
Text 5, 6			Text 9	Text 10	Syntagm B
Text 11			Text 13	Text 14	Syntagm C
Text 15		Text 16	Text 17		Syntagm D

The Sermon on the Mount is divided into two groups of texts: paradigm 1 dominated by its first component, Text 1, the Beatitudes, which contain exclusively eschatological explanatory passages, and

paradigms 3 and 4 with predominantly deductive explanations aiming, however, to unite human existence with death-free life in the kingdom of heaven. These two orientations complement each other, and because of the paradigmatic and syntagmatic structure of the Sermon on the Mount, they alternate and recur consistently. Each syntagm begins with eschatological explanations, since each introduces a new context. It is first related to the kingdom of heaven, and then the revelation of the Beatitudes is applied. This fundamental approach then follows three steps, related to temporal existence with a culmination at the end of each syntagm with the deductive explanations concentrated in its last two components. Such a distribution of explanatory texts demonstrates once more that revelation prevails in the sermon. On the other hand, the revelation of each syntagm, beginning with an eschatological explanation and oriented to the heavenly kingdom, the assumed aspiration of the audience, acquires an exhortative quality by revealing the way to attain the desired goal.

The nature of revelation is to present a new reality, to give the addressee a new option or a new set of possibilities. The large number of explanatory passages in the Sermon on the Mount testifies to this basic objective of the entire discourse, to disclose the code of the communication, the two options available.

Turning to the second difference, we can see that the Beatitudes are an eschatological text because of the invariant of the right part referring in all nine instances to the kingdom of heaven. It is also clear, because of the time structure of the Beatitudes, that the eschatological model in the Beatitudes can be regarded timeless, that is to say, it is everpresent in the lives of those who are congruent with the principle of the left part of the text and are referred to as blessed.

The timeless and personal eschatology of the Beatitudes is unified in the ninth beatitude with the Speaker, Christ, who appears in historical time and is also present timelessly in His principle of the kingdom of heaven. It is the Speaker who is identified with those persecuted for His principle of the kingdom of heaven, who is homogeneous with the blessed in the left part of the Beatitudes (see Charts 3 and 6). This structurally-revealed identity of the Speaker, the bliss of the kingdom of heaven, equates Him with the eschatology of the Beatitudes. In other words, the eschatology of this text is eschatology in Christ – and because of the universality of the Beatitudes, this eschatology is time-

less, contemporary in all ages, past as well as future, on earth and in heaven, for everyone individually and for all humanity. The eschatology in Christ arises whenever the anxiety and the authority of death are repudiated.

The eschatology in Christ as revealed in the structure of the Beatitudes is a remarkably concrete notion. The end of the temporal state of an individual and the beginning of a new state, or life, is manifest in three fundamental spheres of human existence: first, in the personal sphere, by changing an existence dominated by the anxiety of death into the bliss equated with the kingdom of heaven. The second state is related to human history, to political, social, and economic processes. Such processes cease to exist for those who have abandoned the realm of struggle for survival and whom society persecutes and casts out for their adherence to Christ's principle of the kingdom of heaven. The third state is of universal dimension, since for those who are free from the anxiety of death, the nature and the entire universe might appear in the code of "birds of the air" and "lilies of the field," rather than in the code of "the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven" (6: 30). Thus the finitude of the entire universe may be overshadowed by the awareness of universal deathlessness.

These three states result from emancipation from the anxiety of death. For those who participate in this emancipation the universe does not contain imminent destruction and death; human history and progress lose their significance — for their goals appear fallacious; and the existence of the individual transforms into deathfree life, the bliss of the kingdom of heaven.

Thus the structure of the Beatitudes indicates that eschatology in Christ penetrates the temporal world through the presence of those who are barely noticeable. These are the poor in spirit, the meek, the mourning, the pure in heart, and those who are persecuted for their self-identification with the principle of the kingdom of heaven. The eschatology in Christ is inconspicuously present in any society at any time because of the presence of those referred to in the Beatitudes and therefore this eschatology remains personal.

The eschatological model in the remainder of the sermon is presented differently but with unchanged meaning. Not all the texts contain eschatological references. Those nine unquestionably eschato-

logical passages comprise only half of the sermon.* They are as fol-
lows:

Text 3 (Old law):

> Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches
> men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them
> and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell
> you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you
> will never enter the kingdom of heaven   (5: 19, 20);

Text 4 *a* (But I say to you — anger):

> But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable
> to judgment; whoever insults his brother shall be liable to the council, and
> whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be liable to the hell of fire   (5: 22);

Text 4 *b* (Adultery):

> If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away; it is better
> that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown
> into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it
> away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole
> body go into hell   (5: 29, 30);

the introductory verse of Text 5 (Secret righteousness) exemplifying
the eschatology of the entire text:

> Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them; for
> then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven   (6: 1);

the second petition of Text 6 (Lord's Prayer):

> Thy kingdom come   (6: 10);

Text 11 (Judge not):

> Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce
> you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you
> get   (7: 1, 2);

Text 15 (Two ways):

> Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads
> to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and
> the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few   (7: 13, 14);

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* See Harvey K, McArthur, op. cit., pp. 90 – 91, and the footnote 42.

Text 17 (Lord, Lord):

> Not every one who says to me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?" And then will I declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from me, you evil-doers" (7: 21 – 23);

and Text 18 (Two builders):

> and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock (7: 25);

with the contrasting outcome at the end of the parable (7: 27).

The distribution of these nine eschatological passages is shown on the following chart:

Chart 16. The Distribution of the Eschatological Texts in the Remainder of the Sermon

Paradigm 1	Paradigm 2	Paradigm 3	Paradigm 4	
Text 1 (Beatitudes)		Text 3 (Old law)	Text 4a (Anger) Text 4b (Adultery)	Syntagm A
Text 5 (Secret right-eousness) and Text 6 (Lord's Prayer)				Syntagm B
Text 11 (Judge not)				Syntagm C
Text 15 (Two gates)		Text 17 (Lord, Lord)	Text 18 (Two builders)	Syntagm D

Chart 16 demonstrates that in the remainder of the sermon four out of nine eschatological texts are found in the first paradigm, thus initiating new syntagmatic contexts. Furthermore, the remaining five eschatological texts are symmetrically located in the two last components of the two extreme syntagms, A and D. The second paradigm with the invariant of cognition does not contain direct eschatological references. Moreover, we can see that the eschatology in paradigm 1 consistently advances from the joyous Beatitudes to a threatening picture in Text 15 (Two gates) and that the same progression can be detected in paradigms 3 and 4, from their first components, Text 3 (Old law) and Text 4 (But I say to you) to their last components, Text 17 (Lord, Lord) and Text 18 (Two builders). The metadiscursive, eschatological texts (1 and 17, 18), the Speaker's reference to Himself and His message, are located symmetrically at the beginning and the end of the sermon. This fact additionally links the ninth beatitude and syntagm D with its two revelatory passages of Christ: Text 17 (Lord, Lord) and Text 18 (Two builders). This link emphasizes the unity of the personal eschatology in Christ, revealed in the Beatitudes with the universal eschatology including the Parousia of Texts 17 and 18 and frames the entire sermon.

The structure of the Sermon on the Mount may indicate that the Speaker in His discourse does not distinguish personal from universal eschatology and does not relate eschatology to historical time. Both, the personal eschatology in the Beatitudes and the universal eschatology in Texts 17 and 18 are united into one reality through the Speaker, who reveals Himself in these texts. It appears that the personal eschatology contains the universal, while the universal eschatology contains the personal. This blending conveys the notion of eschatology in Christ, personal and universal, individual and collective, past, present, and future, as one eschatological model.

The entire model of temporal existence therefore appears to be eschatological in the sense that, while being pictured as death-permeated in general, it is also revealed as potentially emancipated from the anxiety of death, thus containing the kingdom of heaven, the termination of death, already in the present, that is, undergoing eschatological transfiguration.

In summary, this survey of the two subjects differentiating the Beatitudes from the remainder of the sermon shows that the explana-

tory passages in the remainder of the sermon, although differentiating it from the Beatitudes on the surface, in reality bring these two texts closer to each other, for these passages continue the mode of revelation of the Beatitudes. The subject of this revelation is the kingdom of heaven, which underlies the entire discourse and permeates it with eschatological reality, the second difference between the Beatitudes and the remainder of the sermon. While in the Beatitudes the eschatological notion is timeless and individual, in the remainder of the sermon this model is, rather, universal. Jointly blended with the Speaker, these two eschatological models complement each other, and constitute eschatology in Christ.

7. The Applicability of the Message of the Sermon

The interrelationship of the Beatitudes and the remainder of the sermon leads to further observations in regard to the applicability of the entire revelation of the Sermon on the Mount. The list of human characteristics in the Beatitudes may appear frightening and may make the following of its principles totally prohibitive to the majority of human beings. This reaction to the Beatitudes and to the Sermon on the Mount as a whole would seem to be the prevailing attitude in contemporary Christendom. Most often regarded as inapplicable, too difficult, and perhaps even undesirable to the average person, the Sermon on the Mount, if practiced, allegedly would have harmful effects on culture, civilization, commerce, and the general prosperity and security of society. In view of this alleged impracticability of the Sermon on the Mount, the two subjects differentiating the Beatitudes from the remainder of the sermon along with the unifying structure of the entire discourse convey a significant message.

The structure of the sermon indicates that the Speaker was fully aware of the seemingly prohibitive character of His communication. The sign of this awareness is the change in tonality following the radiant and joyful introduction of the Beatitudes. The sinister atmosphere, as we have seen, is mostly apparent in paradigm 3, that of temporal equity, and in syntagm D, concerned with those who aspire to implement the code of the Beatitudes. The change in tone from joyful to sinister is a clear indication that the code of the discourse,

self-emancipation from the anxiety of death and self-identification with death-free life, is not expected by the Speaker to be accepted without violent resistance by the majority of human beings.

The sobriety of the Speaker in regard to the prospects for His ideology is perhaps the reason for the introduction of much explanatory material which establishes the proximity of human beings to their Father, who is in heaven. This strategy leads the listener to conclude that the principle of the kingdom and death-free life is much more in accord with human ontological essence than is the anxiety of death and the resulting struggle for survival, generally regarded as natural. The above examination of the deductive explanations leads to the conclusion that their purpose is to demonstrate the accord of the revealed model of the kingdom of heaven with the essence of God and, therefore, its accord with the essence of humanity, created in the image of God. The function of deductive explanations is partially polemical, and the Speaker's polemic is directed against the presumed allegation that the model of the kingdom of heaven, revealed in the Beatitudes, totally contrasts with human nature. It is the comprehension by the audience of the essence of the human being that seems to be the aim of the Speaker. This comprehension leads to a new vision of oneself consistent with death-free life and not death-subjugated existence.

The Speaker's model, blending the personal and universal eschatologies in the present, pictures the human being with enormous freedom of choice and with immense, potential gain. A human being can join God in the eschatological struggle for immortality or can struggle for surrogate immortality in the temporal context alien to the notion of eschatology. The Speaker is fully aware of the general restistance of humanity to viewing its world and its existence in eschatological twilight. The teaching of the Speaker, as He conveys, has to face hardship and persecution which only a few may accept, despite the fact that His message reveals immortality as the essence of all human beings.

The invariants of the sermon reflect, however, not only the basic human model, but also the personal and creative development that leads to the revealed model of the kingdom of heaven. The revelation of the model of the kingdom of heaven in the Beatitudes is further reiterated in the inverse equity of paradigm 1, which carries this model throughout the syntagmatic contexts. This revelation must be followed

by the comprehension of the audience, in other words, by cognition, the invariant found in paradigm 2. The invariant of cognition signifies the new comprehension of human essence, according to which humanity is really death-free rather than death-subjugated, and in light of which the prevailing acceptance of the rule of death in human existence appears to be a superstition.

Having assimilated the first two invariants, the individual must confront the temporal status quo — the unconscious loyalty to the authority of death, most clearly expressed by the invariant of temporal equity in paradigm 3. This paradigm contains some of the most sinister passages in the Sermon on the Mount, and being the antipode to the Beatitudes and to paradigm 1, generates the repudiation of the temporal world by those who have passed the first two steps toward the kingdom of heaven in the two preceding paradigms, that is, by those who have received the revelation and have understood it.

Confronting simultaneously the invariants of paradigms 1 and 3, that is, regarding the model of death-free life in conjunction with the model of death-permeated and death-subjugated existence, a person turns with love to the first and with repulsion to the second. This new worldview leads a person to the participation in the revealed death-free life, or to fearlessness of good works represented in paradigm 4.

Thus, the order of the paradigmatic invariants is by no means accidental but mirrors the stages of the spiritual growth of a person exposed to the revelation of the binary model of the Beatitudes, represented in the remainder of the sermon by the contrasting quality of paradigms 1 — to be sought — and 3 — to be repudiated.

The syntagmatic structure of the Sermon on the Mount conveys the same type of progression from the superstitious, although unconscious, veneration of the power of death to the model of the kingdom of heaven. The power of the anxiety of death is first exposed in the most fundamental aspects of existence — the universal context and religious tradition, syntagm A. From this plane recognition and comprehension of the rule of death and its repudiation advance to the social context with its religious and economic standards, which in Israel were closely intertwined, represented in syntagm B. From there the progression of awareness and rejection of the power of the anxiety of death moves to the plane of human relations in the context of syntagm C. From there the recipient of the revelation moves on to the art of recognizing

death-permeated acts in the context of a new community of those who implement the revelation of the Beatitudes in syntagm D. This syntagm and especially its metadiscursive passages, Texts 17 (Lord, Lord) and 18 (Two builders), correlate this community with the teaching of the Speaker, the heavenly kingdom.

The human model that derives from the two differentiating subjects examined in conjunction with the paradigmatic and syntagmatic structure of the Sermon on the Mount suggests the total irrelevance of the question plaguing Christendom for centuries – whether a sane person and a wholesome society can contemplate the sermon seriously. The reason for this question is the apparent difficulty of applying most of the individual maxims in the discourse. However, any attempt to contemplate the practicability of any single maxim or to interpret any of the passages in isolation ignores the structure and, therefore, the meaning of the Sermon on the Mount. The discourse must be perceived as a whole, as a verbal icon with all its details or signs and their interrelations simultaneously registered and interpreted by the addressees. Thus, there is no sense in discussing separately the applicability of the maxim against swearing, or of loving one's enemies. Such discussion and analysis symptomize a lack of comprehension of the structure and revelation of the discourse.

Furthermore, any attempt to asses the difficulty or practicability of the Sermon on the Mount as a whole without personal participation is equally meaningless. The four-step progression modeled on the paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes indicates that personal cognition of the binary model of the kingdom of heaven versus the temporal state, the first to be aspired to and the second to be rejected, places a person in an irreversible process of fundamental transformation. It can be distorted only by hypocrisy, as demonstrated in Texts 16 (False prophets), 17 (Lord, Lord), and 18 (Two builders) in the concluding syntagm D, that is, by the acceptance of the model of the kingdom of heaven (the Beatitudes) but without the rejection of the struggle for security (paradigm 3). The ravenous wolves disguised as sheep and the self-asserting workers of wonders in the name of the Speaker and not His revelation signify the blurring of the basic antitheses of the discourse. The Sermon on the Mount offers through the deductive explanations in Texts 16 and 17 and the concluding Text 18 a clear warning against such a distortion.

The Sermon on the Mount can be examined only in the framework of its binary model, that is, its code. In this respect the invariants of cognition and temporal equity perceived simultaneously are of the greatest importance. Without proper acceptance of both these invariants, that is, without cognition of and personal commitment to the death-free life of the kingdom of heaven and without personal rejection of the death-subjugated temporal existence, any examination of the revelation of the Sermon on the Mount must be conducted within the purview of temporal existence, dominated by the anxiety of death and, therefore, consistent with the rule of the struggle for survival and security. From this point of view the entire Sermon on the Mount inevitably must appear completely absurd.

The question concerning the applicability of the Sermon on the Mount presupposes temporal values. Thus, this question belongs to the realm of human subjugation to the anxiety of death and to death itself, in other words, exclusively to the invariant of temporal equity represented in paradigm 3 without the acceptance of the code of the Beatitudes in its full sense. It is obvious that from the standpoint of temporal equity, the Sermon on the Mount cannot be comprehended and, therefore, cannot be fruitfully examined. Thus, the structure of the Sermon on the Mount leaves the reader with only one alternative: either to disregard the sermon entirely, as an absurd communication, or to perceive it as those who have received the revelation of the binary model, have accepted it, and, therefore, have rejected temporal equity. They cannot examine the Sermon on the Mount from the standpoint of human security, practical well-being, and progress, for they have repudiated such concerns. Thus, any question of the applicability of the Sermon on the Mount to temporal existence appears in light of the structure of the discourse totally irrelevant.

It is not the difficulty of applying the revelation of the Sermon on the Mount that constitutes the major concern of the Speaker, but rather the clear and convincing communication of the binary model, or code, of the Beatitudes in conjunction with the human model of the sermon. The frequent and emphasized explanatory passages in the discourse, especially those with deductive explanations, testify to this concern. It transpires from the structure of the discourse that for those who have heard and who have comprehended and accepted this binary model, the implementation of the Sermon on the Mount is regarded by the

Speaker as not only realizable but simply inevitable, while for those who do not comprehend the revelation or do not turn away from the revealed model of temporal existence, the question of the applicability of the Sermon on the Mount cannot even be raised. Thus, the examination of the Sermon on the Mount in regard to its applicability misses the point of the Speaker in His entire discourse.

The two-step reaction to the fundamental revelation in the Sermon on the Mount, the binary model of the Beatitudes, as we have seen, is outlined in paradigms 2 and 3, which do not constitute full progress without the fourth paradigm, of personal fearlessness or good works. The good works are the manifestation of and testimony to the realization of the two preceding paradigms. Without fearlessness of good works, as the closing parable of the two builders in Text 18 indicates, paradigms 2 and 3 are worthless. From this final paradigm we must conclude that the comprehension of the Sermon on the Mount and, therefore, the assessment of its applicability to temporal existence is possible only jointly with its implementation, the fearlessness of the good works modeled in paradigm 4. The perception, comprehension, assessment, and living of the Sermon on the Mount are blended into one single creative process, in which the personal participation follows the perception of its paradoxical revelation, and the cognition of this revelation follows the personal participation. The Speaker has revealed not a legal system but a human model to be implemented creatively according to the personal aptitudes of each individual (see p. 84) – either fully or even partially as Text 13 (Old law) indicates, with joy (the Beatitudes), and without hypocrisy according to syntagm D.

The Speaker was obviously well aware how frightening it may be to participate in His paradox of the life-permeated existence deprived of any security in the temporal world. Therefore, the Speaker uncovered some aspects of this existence, some forces acting in this unknown state. These disclosures are located in the paradigm 4 of fearlessness, or of personal participation in the paradox of the sermon, in Text 10 (Birds and lilies): "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness [God's], and all these things shall be yours as well" (6:33), and in Text 14 (Golden rule): "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (7:7). Thus in paradigm 4 of personal participation in the revealed paradox, the Speaker dealt

within His system with the question of the applicability of His paradox and gave reassurance to His audience.

The Sermon on the Mount is a model which can be fully perceived only from a position within this model. To an outsider like this writer, only its most superficial aspects can become accessible, thanks to its structure and its modeling system. It appears that further penetration into the revelation of the Sermon on the Mount can be achieved, not so much by means of rational analysis, but rather by the irrational, or sur-rational, personal participation in the message of the Speaker, the eschatology in Christ.

8. The Speaker

The metadiscursive character of the two closing passages in the Sermon on the Mount (the ninth beatitude and syntagm D) blends the revelation of the text with the Speaker to the extent that each becomes indispensable to the other. This particular Speaker cannot be perceived without His revelation, and this particular revelation cannot exist apart from this Speaker. Therefore, the Speaker, or the Revealer, of the Sermon on the Mount must be examined in the context of His discourse.

In this light the audience's reaction to the Speaker and His revelation acquires a new and highly significant function: "And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes" (7: 28,29). The notion of authority ascribed to the Speaker by the crowds stands in profound discord with the dominant mode of His discourse as established in this study, namely, exhortative revelation. The imperative mode in the Sermon on the Mount appears only sporadically and is overshadowed by the dominating modality of revelation. Assuming that the Sermon on the Mount, as we know it, is Matthew's abridged version of Christ's standard sermon which was considerably longer, comprising in all probability many passages of illustration, explanations, and interrelations of the individual sayings, we may safely assume that in the original discourse the mode of revelation was even more dominant than that of exhortation. The notion of authority, ascribed to the reaction of the crowd, must therefore apply not as much to the modality of the discourse as to the

exclusive perspective of the Speaker apparent in His message. It is the content of the revelation that demonstrates the authority of the Speaker rather than His attitude to the audience.

The above reading of the closing verse (7:29) of the text might appear surprising unless the code of the Speaker's revelation is considered, namely, the fundamental modelling system of the discourse, the revelation of the model of the temporal world and human behavior, both totally controlled and conditioned by the terror of annihilation and death. This model, juxtaposed to the model of the kingdom of heaven and emancipation from the authority of death, reveals the stance of the Speaker. He presents His binary model as an external observer of human existence; therefore, He can see it clearly and can understand fully all its effects on the individual.

The binary modeling system of the Sermon on the Mount, first revealed in the Beatitudes, concerns the basic features of human existence — death and the anxiety of annihilation, and most importantly the ability to overcome mortality. The very fact of the Speaker's awareness of the latter feature suggests His ability to view it from a vantage point, not subject to the effects of the features being observed and examined. His position is like that of the linguist who knows the structure of a language and understands why one morpheme follows another in a given phrase, while the average native speaker utters the phrase flawlessly but without any awareness of its morphology. It is similar to the position of a Western traveller in a Southern country, who notices that the natives wear few clothes, while the natives perceive no such lack. A culture does not see itself and therefore cannot describe itself objectively. It takes an outsider not immersed in cultural idiosyncrasies and therefore not conditioned by them to examine the particular culture. In the same fashion, the Speaker in the Sermon on the Mount revealed the fundamental stimulants of ambition, effort, and aspiration, summarized as the human struggle for survival generated by the anxiety of death, and offered this revelation to the audience. Even though acting under the effect of the anxiety of death — the audience, blinded by the proximity and permanence of this anxiety, was not aware of this stimulant.

We can, of course, question the exclusiveness of the Speaker's knowledge that underlies the entire ideology and message of the Sermon on the Mount. The fact that human beings are mortal is not new;

human struggle for survival is well known and well examined. The binary modeling system of the Sermon on the Mount indicates, however, that the struggle for survival covers not only the areas of competition or even direct confrontation, but virtually all aspects of human existence, including discriminating, or selective love and friendship, as well as self-defense, self-expansion, and self-affirmation, and thus uncovers the anxiety of death as the prime motive for human behavior. The awareness of the permeation of human existence by death conditions human perception of the world and broadens the commonly accepted dichotomy of life and death into a threefold system of life, existence, and death. Human existence with the sole purpose of self-preservation contains very little, if anything, of life. All the interest, aspiration, thoughts, and emotions of such an existence are conditioned not by life, but by death, and therefore are identified by the secondary language of the Sermon on the Mount with death.

The most striking insight of the Speaker, however, is the new and paradoxical alternative to human existence under the threat of death. This alternative replaces the frantic struggle for survival by the radical disassociation of a person from the anxiety of death. Thus, the Speaker opens a totally new avenue for the longing for immortality, namely, the present realization of immortality by means of fearless self-contraction and nondiscriminating love for others.

The structure of the Sermon on the Mount replaces death-permeated existence with a new concept of existence which, though still remaining within the temporal world, is death-free. Life, in the language of the Sermon on the Mount, is referred to as the kingdom of heaven, or simply life, and its presence is characterized as bliss. This model of human existence and human essence is new; it connotes the authority of the Speaker's exclusive knowledge and thus explains the reaction of the crowds to the Revealer of the Sermon on the Mount: "... for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes" (7: 29).

The comparison of Christ's teaching with that of the scribes supports the above reading of this passage. In a certain sense, the scribes had authority in the society at that time, namely, the authority of erudition and expertise, but their knowledge was limited to the boundaries of temporal existence, including their expertise in the Scripture, the law and the prophets. This knowledge, being limited to human existence conditioned by mortality and the anxiety of death, had no

liberating force and, therefore, in comparison with the revelation of the
Sermon on the Mount, was powerless and unauthoritative. The authority
in this passage is not that of an order or a command but the authority of
a superior being, who is in possession of knowledge and insight totally
inaccessible to the audience. This authority is the knowledge that is con-
veyed by an outsider. More specifically, in terms of the modelling system
in the Sermon on the Mount, it is the knowledge of the death-free Speaker
revealed to the death-subjugated audience.

The first verse of the closing statement makes this point even
clearer: "And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were
astonished at his teaching" (7: 28). Their astonishment is quite under-
standable when we realize the fundamental paradox of the entire
Sermon on the Mount with its invariant of inverse equity, and with
the code of the entire discourse − the juxtaposition of existence under
the anxiety of death with the death-free life referred to in the Beatitudes
and identified with the kingdom of heaven. The actual presence of the
kingdom of heaven at the time of the delivery of the Speaker's discourse
is revealed to the crowd through the physical presence of the Revealer,
·vho, as the structure of His utterance indicates, is both the medium
of His revelation as well as the revelation itself.

The fact that the crowds were astonished signifies their comprehen-
sion of this revelation, while their acknowledgement of the Speaker's
au hority signifies their awareness of the exclusive vantage point from
which this revelation was offered. Both the message of the sermon and
the vantage point of the Speaker werc perceived by the audience as
transcendental, as coming from outside the realm of human existence,
and as representing the end of the existing order, or the eschatological
reality of the Speaker, as yet unknown in the temporal world dominated
by death. Within this eschatology in Christ the existence of those who
focus on death is identical to death, and the existence of those free of
the anxiety of death is identical to life, to the Speaker, and to the
kingdom of heaven, or the kingdom of God.

The Sermon on the Mount can be regarded as a homily only if
perceived on the level of the primary language. On the secondary
language level, however, the text eradicates the boundaries between
the temporal and eternal, between finite and infinite, puts the audience
face to face with the transcendental reality and therefore represents a
mystical revelation or a mystical model of mankind and the universe.

Christ's Standard Sermon and Luke's Sermon on the Plain

The preservation of the structure of Christ's standard sermon in Matthew's version can be supported by even a cursory examination of Luke's Sermon on the Plain (6: 20 – 49). The sermon in Luke is structured similarly to the one in Matthew, and the common features of these two texts exceed the obvious similarity of their beginning, the Beatitudes, and their ending, the parable of the two builders, as well as several sayings shared by both.

As the Sermon on the Plain is approximately one-fourth as long as the Sermon on the Mount, assuming both texts are abridgements of Christ's sermons, which in all probability, as the major pronouncement, were of comparable length, we can surmise that Luke had to eliminate from the available oral or written version much more material than Matthew. This difference in the degree of abridgement is apparent from a much greater abruptness in Luke's version. Between individual highlights greater leaps occur in Luke's text. Therefore, it would seem likely that Luke's radical abridgement of his original source obscured the structure of Christ's standard sermon as it appears in Matthew.

The audience for Luke's sermon also seems different from Matthew's and, therefore, the Speaker's emphasis shifts. It is not necessarily so important that Luke wrote his sermon for the early Christian Greek community, while Matthew's Gospel was written for Jewish readers and, therefore, with a different emphasis. Christ could have addressed the two sermons recorded by Matthew and Luke on different occasions to different audiences and could have focused on different aspects of the overall message – the presence of the kingdom of heaven. Contemporaries with well-trained memories could have recorded these

two sermons, and one of the records could have reached or have been chosen by Matthew, the other by Luke. The assumption, however, that in both instances the Speaker has delivered a version of His standard sermon raises the question as to whether there is a sufficient structural similarity in the two versions, the Sermon on the Mount and the Sermon on the Plain.

Luke's sermon can easily be divided into fourteen individual texts, ten of which have their analogues in the Sermon on the Mount. The fourteen texts of Luke can be classified according to the invariants found in Matthew's sermon. The following layout of the Sermon on the Plain divides it into individual texts (LT), wherever possible relates them to corresponding texts in the Sermon on the Mount (MT), and classifies them in regard to the paradigmatic invariants and syntagmatic contexts established in the Sermon on the Mount.

LT 1

Blessed are you poor, for yours is the king-dom of God.

Blessed are you that hunger now, for you shall be satisfied.

Blessed are you that weep now, for you shall laugh.

Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, on account of the Son of man!

Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.

(6: 20 – 23)

four of nine beatitudes in MT 1; inverse equity; universal context, syntagm A

LT 2

But woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation.

Woe to you that are full now, for you shall hunger.

Woe to you that laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.

Woe to you, when all men speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.

(6: 24 – 26)

no parallel in Matthew; inverse equity; universal context, syntagm A

LT 3

But I say to you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.

To him who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from him who takes away your cloak do not withhold your coat as well.
(6: 27 – 29)

Verses 27, 28 representing MT 4*f* (5: 44 – 48), verse 29 representing MT 4*e* (5: 39, 40); fearlessness or good works, syntagm A

LT 4

Give to every one who begs from you; and of him who takes away your goods do not ask them again.
(6: 30)

MT 4*e* (5: 42); fearlessness or good works, syntagm A

LT 5

And as you wish that men would do to you, do so to them.
(6: 31)

MT 14 (7: 12), the golden rule; fearlessness or good works, syntagm C

LT 6

If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.
(6: 32 – 36)

MT 4*f* (5: 44 – 48), with some change in order; fearlessness or good works, syntagm A

LT 7

Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back.
(6: 37, 38)

extended version of MT 11 (7: 1, 2); inverse equity, syntagm C

LT 8

He also told them a parable: "Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit?"

(6: 39)

no parallel in Matthew; cognition because of lack of knowledge caused by blindness, syntagm A

LT 9

A disciple is not above his teacher, but every one when he is fully taught will be like his teacher.

(6: 40)

no parallel in Matthew; cognition because of reference to the mastery of the teaching, and because of reference to teacher, syntagm B

LT 10

Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, "Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye," when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye.

(6: 41, 42)

MT 12; cognition, syntagm C

LT 11

For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit; for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thorns, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush.

(6: 43, 44)

a part of MT 16 (7: 16 – 18); cognition, syntagm D

LT 12

The good man out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil man out of his evil treasure produces evil; for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

(6: 45)

no parallel in Matthew, but a continuation of LT 11, therefore cognition, syntagm D

LT 13

Why do you call me "Lord, Lord," and not do what I tell you?

(6: 46)

the topic of MT 17 (7: 21); temporal equity, syntagm D

LT 14

Every one who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep, and laid the foundation upon rock; and when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house, and could not shake it, because it had been well built. But he who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation; against which the stream broke, and immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.

(6: 47 – 49)

MT 18 (7: 24 – 27); fearlessness or good works, syntagm D

Luke's extreme abridgement of his source becomes apparent from the comparison of MT 16 (False prophets) with LT 11. While in MT 16 self-assertion in leadership is first established and then the general principle of cognition is added, in LT 11 only the principle is retained:

> For no good tree bears bad fruit, not again does a bad tree bear good fruit; for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thorns, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush.
>
> (6: 43 – 44)

The principle is further augmented by a second explanation in LT 12:

> The good man out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil man out of his evil treasure produces evil; for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.
>
> (6: 45)

Matthew could well have deleted this passage in MT 16, which, even so, remains longer than LT 11 and LT 12 combined.

Another clear illustration of Luke's drastic abridgements is MT 17 (Lord, Lord) with its dialogue and Christ's final verdict, which in LT 13 is reduced to one single question:

> Why do you call me "Lord, Lord," and not do what I tell you?
>
> (6: 46)

The last three texts in Luke's source obviously appeared in the same order and location as in the Sermon on the Mount. His drastic cuts in the first two texts, LT 12 and 13, deprived them of clear interrelation, while only the last, LT 14 (Two builders), remains complete and serves as the conclusion to the entire Sermon on the Plain.

A summary of the projection of the Sermon on the Plain onto the Sermon on the Mount follows:

Chart 17. Structure of the Two Sermons

Paradigms: Chapters in Matthew:	Paradigm 1 Inverse equity	Paradigm 2 Cognition	Paradigm 3 Temporal equity	Paradigm 4 Fearlessness in regard to death	Syntagmatic Contexts:
5	MT 1 LT 1 LT 2	MT 2 LT 8	MT 3	MT 4 LT 3 LT 4 LT 6	Syntagm A Universal and traditional
6	MT 5 MT 6	MT 7 MT 8 LT 9	MT 9	MT 10	Syntagm B Religious and economic
7 first half	MT 11 LT 7	MT 12 LT 10	MT 13	MT 14 LT 5	Syntagm C Personal and inter- relational
7 second half	MT 15	MT 16 LT 11 LT 12	MT 17 LT 13	MT 18 LT 14	Syntagm D Implement- ing

Christ's standard sermon which reached Luke was in all probability directed to another audience than Matthew's. The sermon recorded by

Luke presumably was addressed to an andience consisting for the most part of destitute and oppressed people, with some scribes and Pharisees perhaps present but not predominant. This difference may explain some features of the Sermon on the Plain: the dramatic juxtaposition between the beatitudes and woes, the absence of all the polemical references to the Old Testament tradition found in MT 3 (Old law) and MT 4 (But I say unto you), as well as Luke's almost entire omission of the context of syntagm B − the religious practices and economic organization of society.

The character of the audience may also explain the absence in Luke's version of the entire third paradigm of temporal equity. In the Sermon on the Mount this paradigm contains, besides MT 3 (Old law), the highly provocative components MT 9 (God and mammon), MT 13 (Dogs and swine), and, only partially preserved by Luke, MT 17 (Lord, Lord). In the Sermon on the Plain the third paradigm of temporal equity could have been regarded as unnecessary, for LT 2 (Woes) refers to mundane values and to those who are rich, full, happy, and popular, that is, obedient servants of mammon.

The specific makeup of the audience listening to the Sermon on the Plain is reflected in the length of paradigm 2 with its invariant of cognition. In Luke's version it contains five components, two of which are absent in Matthew:

> LT8:
> He also told them a parable: "Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit?"   (6:39)

and

> LT 9:
> A disciple is not above his teacher, but every one when he is fully taught will be like his teacher.   (6:40)

The following text, LT 10, exactly reiterates MT 12 (Speck and log) in syntagm C, followed immediately by the last component of the paradigm of cognition in syntagm D, MT 16 (False prophets), drastically abridged by Luke, yet augmented, as was shown above, by LT 12. The larger space devoted to the invariant of cognition in Luke's Sermon on the Plain might indicate that this audience was of the lowest social stratum. In this connection we may assume that the Sermon on the Plain could have contained a large number of various explanatory

passages like LT 12, even more than the Sermon on the Mount, but that Luke eliminated them according to his general editorial strategy.

The audience of the Sermon on the Plain was confronted right from the beginning with its first syntagm, a tightly organized discourse with two analogous extremities, LT 1 (Beatitudes) and LT 3 to 6 (a summary of the invariant of fearlessness or good works). LT 2 (Woes) is located in the middle, contrasting with both LT 1 and LT 3 to 6. It is plausible that the opening section in Christ's standard sermon, on some occasions, could have been structured in this way, with the sharpest contrasts exposed right at the outset of the communication.

However, no matter how much Christ's standard sermon was adjusted to a particular type of audience, the general structure of the Sermon on the Mount can still be detected despite Luke's drastic cuts. The overall order of the paradigmatic invariants remains the same. As Chart 17 shows, after Luke's first syntagm comprising LT 1 to 6, the entire paradigmatic sequence of the Sermon on the Mount occurs in Luke's remaining text. The first invariant of inverse equity is repeated in LT 7; the second invariant of cognition appears in LT 8 to 12; the third invariant of empirical equity follows in LT 13; and at the end the invariant of fearlessness or good works, LT 14, reappears. Thus, the Speaker's adjustment of His standard sermon and the Evangelist's severe shortening of it still do not entirely disrupt the basic structure of the sermon apparently preserved to a much fuller degree by Matthew in the Sermon on the Mount.

There are no substantial changes in regard to the message of the sermon. Luke's version establishes at the beginning in the Beatitudes inverse equity in the context of poverty, perhaps because of the audience. The bliss of poverty and hardship is contrasted with the woes of the privileged and the rich. The third introductory section, LT 3 to 6, commenting on LT 1, the Beatitudes, opens with predominantly internal notions in LT 3:

> But I say to you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you   (6: 27, 28),

and continues on with external notions:

> To him who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from him who takes away your cloak do not withhold your coat as well   (6: 29).

At this point we can see the same strategy of the Speaker established in the predominantly internal and external beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount.

In the following text LT 4,

> Give to every one who begs from you; and of him who takes away your goods do not ask them again (6:30),

the destitutes, who in Luke's Beatitudes were addressed solely in socio-economic terms, are offered a spiritual dimension and comprehension of their state with the following formula, LT 5, applied to all:

> And as you wish that men would do to you, do so to them (6:31).

Thus, with the interaction of LT 1 and LT 3 – 5 and their contrast with LT 2 (Woes), the poor, the hungry, the weeping, and the persecuted may become also the poor in spirit as referred to in Matthew, if they freely accept their poverty, sorrow, and hardship. In sharing whatever little they have, they become by free choice those who are poor and underprivileged and do not aspire to change this state. On the other hand, one cannot exclude the possibility that the woes in some form and length were omitted by Matthew from his version of Christ's standard sermon.

The following LT 6 explains the preceding texts with reference to sinners as in LT 2 (Woes). The entire passage closes with a general statement:

> your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful (6:35, 36).

This section of the Sermon on the Plain further points to the adjustments of Christ's standard sermon to the particular audience. Those referred to in LT 1 (Beatitudes) have much to forgive those who are addressed in LT 2 (Woes), and, therefore, it is particularly important for the former to have the example of the kindness and mercy of the Father, the Most High, to those who are ungrateful and selfish, in short, even to those mentioned in LT 2 (Woes). This is, perhaps, why in the phrase of Matthew, "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (5:48), "perfect" is changed to "merciful," since for the destitutes being merciful would be close to the state of perfection.

Chart 17 demonstrates that Luke retains in an abridged version Matthew's entire paradigm 4 of fearlessness or good works with the exception, however, of an elaborate passage on poverty in MT 10 with reference to the birds of the air and the lilies of the field. We can assume that if this omission did not result from Luke's abridgement but from the Speaker's adjustment of His sermon to the audience, MT 10 was excluded because it would have been out of place in a speech addressed to the destitutes and underprivileged. It would be grotesque to compare the state of this audience with the beauty of the lilies and the carefree life of the birds. These images may be addressed rather to those who in their materialistic anxieties contrast with the poor in spirit.

In regard to the remainder of Luke's sermon, only two points must be clarified for the purposes of this study. LT 7, when compared with its counterpart MT 11 (Judge not), suggests again that the Sermon on the Plain was addressed to a different audience from that of the Sermon on the Mount and therefore has a different emphasis. In MT 11 the self-contraction is presented in terms both internal (to judge) and external (to give) with the emphasis on inverse equity:

> Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get   (7:1, 2).

In LT 7 the audience of destitutes is addressed by a longer discourse with greater emphasis on the internal aspect of self-contraction, as well as on boundless generosity, the essence of the kingdom of heaven:

> Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back   (6:37, 38).

The invariant of inverse equity is more forcefully presented in LT 7 than in MT 11, perhaps also because throughout the Sermon on the Plain this invariant appears only two times instead of four (see Chart 17).

The structural similarity of Luke's and Matthew's sermons is further indicated by the identical occurrence and location of the metadiscursive passages. In both sermons they appear at the end of the Beatitudes and also in the last two texts, LT 13 – 14 and MT 17 – 18.

However, probably because of Luke's substantial abridgement of Christ's sermon, the summarizing function of the two metadiscursive closing sections is not apparent as it is in Matthew (see Chart 13), and, therefore, the metadiscourses in the Sermon on the Plain have less impact.

Finally, we must turn to an important aspect of Luke's version apparent in Chart 17. The sequences of the individual texts in each version differ in that components of the same invariant appear in the Sermon on the Mount at consistent intervals and therefore constitute individual paradigms, while in the Sermon on the Plain the texts with the same invariant are located in immediate proximity to each other and therefore appear as syntagmatic components. While the Sermon on the Mount contains both paradigmatic and syntagmatic structures, the Sermon on the Plain is restricted to a pseudo-syntagmatic structure with individual components appearing on the syntagmatic axis but united not only by the proximity of one text to another but rather by their invariants. The latter feature is evident from Luke's cluster of texts containing the invariant of fearlessness all but one text united in the section LT 3 – 6, as well as from his cluster of individual texts pertaining to the invariant of cognition, all of them united in the section LT 8 – 12. This clustering would seem to result, not from the Speaker's adjustment of His standard sermon to the particular audience, but rather from Luke's editing of his source.

The predominance of the syntagmatic sequences in Luke's version is most obvious from the cluster of texts united by the invariant of cognition, LT 8 – 12. The abruptness of the transitions among the first four texts in this cluster of five are the most striking in the entire Sermon on the Plain. We can sense considerable omissions between LT 8:

> He also told them a parable: "Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit?" (6:39)

and LT 9:

> A disciple is not above his teacher, but every one when he is fully taught will be like his teacher (6:40).

Omissions are also evident between LT 9 and LT 10:

> Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, "Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye," when you yourself do not see

the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye   (6: 41, 42),

and to a lesser degree omission is felt between LT 10 and LT 11:

For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit; for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thorns, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush   (6: 43, 44).

On the other hand, these texts seem to repeat the syntagmatic sequences detected in Matthew's version of Christ's standard sermon. LT 8 (Blind leader) seems to belong to the universal context (syntagm A) because of the reference to the fundamental means of human perception, vision. LT 9 (Teacher and pupil) may be regarded as belonging to the context of the religious structure of a society (syntagm B) because of the reference to the teacher-pupil relationship. LT 10 (Speck and log), positioned relatively at the same place as MT 12, reflects the context of personal relationships (syntagm C); and, finally, LT 11 appears in the same slot as in Matthew, and if viewed in the same context as MT 16 (False prophets), to which it is doubtlessly linked, can be regarded as pertaining to the last context, the implementation of Christ's teachings (syntagm D). Thus, we may cautiously speculate about the original form of the Sermon on the Plain, which might have had four syntagmatic sequences, as in Matthew, but lost this horizontal structure through drastic abridgement and by clustering Matthew's paradigmatic components, thus creating pseudo-syntagmatic sequences. This hypothesis can be further supported by the separation of LT 14 (Two builders) from the cluster of texts with the same invariant of fearlessness or good works, LT 3 – 6. This instance demonstrates the fundamental structure of Christ's standard sermon preserved in the Sermon on the Mount, the recurrence of individual paradigmatic components at regular intervals, according to the syntagmatic progression of the entire discourse. Thus, the assumption that the original of the Sermon on the Plain was identical or very similar in structure to the Sermon on the Mount appears to be quite plausible.

This assumption leads us to the question: How could the original sermon, which had to contain paradigmatic and syntagmatic structures in order to communicate its message, in Luke turn into a collection of clusters containing paradigmatic components presented on a syntag-

matic axis? I have no definite answer to this question but rather a highly speculative suggestion.

The text of Christ's standard sermon in its written version presumably available to Luke must have undergone some sort of analysis in order to be as radically abridged as it appears in the Sermon on the Plain. As we have assumed, Luke's abridgement of the original text was more extreme than Matthew's, and, therefore, Luke's editorial strategy must have been different. While Matthew in all probability preserved the highlights of the original text in the order of their appearance, Luke, in order to achieve the utmost brevity, could very well have compiled individual fragments or texts that in his judgment were most important according to their invariants. Perhaps adjusting the text of the sermon to the needs of Theophilus (Luke 1: 1 – 4), the Evangelist focused his attention on the invariants of fearlessness or good works and cognition, if they had not already been emphasized by the Speaker, as suggested above. In any case, Luke in his attempt to render Christ's standard sermon succinctly, probably eliminated almost entire structural units, paradigm 3 of temporal equity and syntagm B of the religious and economic context (see Chart 17), and clustered a number of individual texts according to their invariants. These changes could have appeared reasonable, for the syntagmatic sequences had already been obscured by the elimination of paradigm 3 and syntagm B. Therefore, clustering individual texts according to their invariants might have appeared justified and useful for the condensation of the perhaps voluminous original text. Nevertheless, such an editorial strategy turned out, in general, inferior to that of Matthew and led to a definite distortion of the structure of Christ's original sermon. This structure can still be traced in Luke's version but only in conjunction with the structure uncovered in Matthew's Sermon on the Mount. It is only on the basis of the paradigmatic invariants apparent in Matthew's version that we can identify the clusters of individual texts in the Sermon on the Plain, and only because of the syntagmatic system in Matthew's version can we detect traces of syntagmatic contexts and their order in Luke's text.

Christ's Standard Sermon and the Parable of the Sower

In addition to Luke's Sermon on the Plain, we can also find traces of the basic structure of Christ's standard sermon elsewhere. The paradigmatic invariants in their sequence in the Sermon on the Mount (see Chart 12) are clearly reiterated in Christ's explanation of His parable of the sower in Matthew 13, also recorded in Luke 8. Matthew's version reads as follows:

13: 18 Hear then the parable of the sower.

19 When any one hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in his heart; this is what was sown along the path.

20 As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;

21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.

22 As for what was sown among thorns, this is he who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the delight in riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.

23 As for what was sown on good soil, this is he who hears the word and understands it; he indeed bears fruit, and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.

In this explanation appears the following sequence of basic components of the parable, each of which can be identified with a paradigmatic invariant of the Sermon on the Mount (see Chart 18, p. 228).

In each of the four instances of the parable the word of the kingdom occurs; first it is heard but not understood; next it is heard and received but lost; then it is heard, by implication is also received, but is

Chart 18. The Invariants in the Parable of the Sower

	Verse	Components of the Parable	Invariant of the Sermon on the Mount
1.	19	"the word of the kindgdom"	inverse equity — the Beatitudes
2.	_____	"does not understand it"	cognition (negative)
3.	20	"immediatel receives it with joy	cognition
4.	21	"when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away"	temporal equity in its threatening aspect
5.	22	"this is he who hears the word"	cognition
6.	_____	"the cares of the world and the delight of riches choke the word"	temporal equity in its luring aspect
7.	23	"this is he who hears the word and understands it"	cognition
8.	_____	"he indeed bears fruit"	fearlessness or good works.

forgotten; and lastly and most importantly, is heard, understood, and implemented. Thus, the revelation of the kingdom and cognition occur in each instance. The progression consists of the projection of the revelation onto the temporal world. In the first instance such a projection remains impossible, for no comprehension of the revelation has taken place; in the second and third instances the temporal world threatens or lures the recipient of the word away from the revelation; and in the fourth instance the recipient passes all three stages successfully — receives the revelation of the Word, understands it, overcomes the fear of destruction and the pleasure of self-assertion and passes from these stages to the last one, the implementation of the teaching of the principle of the kingdom of heaven by fearlessness or good works. Thus, the steps in the parable of the sower appear in the same quantity and order as the paradigmatic invariants of the Sermon on the Mount. Christ apparently applied the structure of the Sermon on the Mount in various genres (sermons and parables), and perhaps regarded this structure the most effective for certain purposes of His teaching.

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* The numbers in italics refer to the section dealing with the Text.